

***The Scottish Enlightenment:
Reconfiguring Citizenship for a
Commercial Age***

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I would like to dedicate this Thesis to the memory of my grandparents, Will and Mair Francis and Gwyn Davies.

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Abstract

This Thesis addresses the Scottish Enlightenment's reconfiguration of citizenship in a commercial age. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were a time of enormous challenge for Scotland, moving from a martial past to a commercial present. As the nature of society changed, so did the nature of citizenship and the Scottish Enlightenment sought to provide answers to the questions of what kind of citizen you should be and could be in this new age. I will argue these questions were central to the work of key figures of the Scottish Enlightenment and that we can most usefully understand their contributions to the debate by focussing on the concept of political responsibility, a concept I will develop and utilise to examine and assess changing notions of citizenship and appropriate social and political behaviour.

Scottish Enlightenment thinkers were concerned with issues central to civic humanism, such as luxury, corruption and their impact on participation in political life. However, they were not limited by civic humanism and sought to understand and rethink these issues in the context of a commercialising society where citizenship could no longer be largely based on martial activity. They were realistic and recognised the necessity for change, that in commercial society a new kind of citizenship was required. This Thesis is concerned with the boundaries of citizenship in this new age: who was judged to be qualified to be a citizen and why; who was disqualified and why. Thus, a central focus will be on issues of inclusion and exclusion. While this Thesis is primarily an interpretive work, implicit throughout is the question of how successful these thinkers' attempts to reconfigure citizenship for a commercial age were and whether it was possible to reconfigure civic humanism for this new age.

Along with the work of those universally recognised as key figures of the Scottish Enlightenment, such as Adam Ferguson and Adam Smith, I will consider not only predecessors, such as Gershom Carmichael and Francis Hutcheson, but also those whose works are literary rather than philosophical, such as James Macpherson, Henry Mackenzie and Walter Scott. I will argue that the Scottish Enlightenment has to be considered in a broader way than it often is, in terms of both time and material. In terms of time, the Scottish Enlightenment is a process not an event and needs to be understood in the context of a continuing Scottish debate on citizenship and political responsibility. In terms of material, the philosophers' concerns were shared by journalists and novelists, whose contribution is too little considered.

Disclaimer

I declare that this Thesis constitutes my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Katherine Francis

The Scottish Enlightenment:
Reconfiguring citizenship for a commercial age

Introduction

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were a time of enormous challenge for Scotland, which had a grand martial past and a grand commercial future but an unsettled present. What kind of citizen should you be in this new age? What kind of citizen *could* you be in this new age? I will argue these questions were central to the work of key figures in the Scottish Enlightenment. More specifically, I will suggest that we can most usefully understand their contributions by focussing on the concept of political responsibility, a concept I will develop and utilise to examine and assess changing notions of citizenship and appropriate social and political behaviour in a less martial and more commercial age. Along with the work of those universally recognised as key figures in the Scottish Enlightenment, such as Adam Ferguson and Adam Smith, I will consider not only predecessors, such as Gershom Carmichael and Francis Hutcheson, but also others whose works are literary rather than philosophical, such as James Macpherson, Henry Mackenzie and Walter Scott. I will also examine seventeenth and eighteenth century ‘feminist’ contributions to the debate from outwith Scotland. My reasons for this breadth of sources and material will be outlined later in this Introduction. There has been much valuable work on the Scottish Enlightenment by writers and thinkers, including David Allan, Christopher Berry, Anand Chitnis, John Robertson, Richard B. Sher and, especially, Nicholas Phillipson.¹ However, since this is primarily an interpretive work I will not be engaging with such secondary literature to any significant degree.

Scottish Enlightenment thinkers sought to contribute to a greater understanding of society, of social and political forces in a newly commercial age. As John Robertson writes: “Few societies have experienced more acutely the problem of a conflict between established political institutions and the demands of economic development than eighteenth-century Scotland; few thinkers have reflected on that problem as

¹ Indeed, I was fortunate enough to be supervised by Nicholas Phillipson for my MSc in Scottish Enlightenment studies.

thoroughly as those of the Scottish Enlightenment.”² The ‘Scottish Enlightenment’ is a term generally used to signify the explosion of ideas in eighteenth century Scotland when, as T. M. Devine writes, Scotland became one of the “intellectual powerhouses” of Europe.³ Along with this intellectual expansion there was also extraordinary commercial advance and a concomitant fascination with the progress of civilisation and the benefits and dangers of commerce. Members of the Scottish Enlightenment were realistic and recognised the necessity of change but were also concerned with the corrupting effects of commerce and capitalism, particularly on manners, morals and civic participation.

1. Civic humanism

To focus, as I will, on concerns with citizenship points one towards one of the most influential interpretations of Scottish Enlightenment social and political thought, according to which its character and concerns can be seen as primarily shaped by civic humanism. I will briefly describe this approach and indicate what I accept from it and where I differ. Exemplary cases of this approach are works such as Istvan Hont and Michael Ignatieff’s 1983 edited collection of articles, *Wealth and Virtue: The Shaping of Political Economy in the Scottish Enlightenment* and John Robertson’s 1985 *The Scottish Enlightenment and the Militia Issue*. As Donald Winch argues, in his contribution to the former, in Scottish Enlightenment social and political writing the language of corruption and virtue appears “as an expression of those citizenly values threatened by specialized commercial society for which modern substitutes could not readily be found; it features as a set of criteria for judging the point at which progress worked to the disadvantage of man as citizen or political animal.”⁴ Civic humanism (also known as civic republicanism and the civic tradition) has its modern roots in the work of Niccolo Machiavelli and his republican followers, such as James Harrington, who developed it “to define the institutional, moral and

² ‘The Scottish Enlightenment at the limits of the civic tradition’, pp.137-178 in Hont and Ignatieff (eds.) 1983: 137.

³ 2003: 175.

⁴ ‘Adam Smith’s ‘enduring particular result’: a political and cosmopolitan perspective’, pp.253-269 in Hont and Ignatieff (eds.) 1983: 262.

material conditions of political community, understanding political community as the free participation of all citizens in public life.”⁵ The institutional conditions were: a regular constitution which distributed legal executive and judicial powers among assemblies and offices open to all citizens; a military force which involved all citizens in the community’s defence, a militia in preference to a Standing Army. The moral conditions were public spirit and civic virtue, this last signifying unceasing, single-minded devotion to the state. This civic virtue also required certain material conditions: in particular, citizens needed to be economically independent and free from the necessity to work.

The central principle of civic humanism was active citizenship by a political elite, with the three key elements of active citizenship being the ability to participate politically, the will to participate politically and constitutional arrangements that enabled and encouraged that participation. Its key concerns were luxury, corruption and a Standing Army. Civic humanists worried that as societies grew richer, the elite were corrupted by luxury and the charms of an easy life, becoming unwilling and unable to participate in political life. This unwillingness and inability was institutionalised by a Standing Army, which removed from citizens the opportunity to practise their virtue. Civic humanists argued that a man was not truly a man, not fully human, unless engaged in public duties, contending that “the development of the individual towards self-fulfilment is only possible when the individual acts as a citizen...”⁶ Citizen militias enabled this development, obliging every citizen to bear arms and defend their state, thus affirming their civic virtue. Militias served both as a defensive and a unifying force, bonding citizen to citizen and citizen to state.

It should be no surprise that there was a reconsideration of civic humanist concerns in seventeenth and eighteenth century Scotland. The 1603 Union of Crowns moved the Crown and the Court to London; the 1707 Act of Union abolished the Scottish

⁵ Robertson 1985: 9. Robertson notes that he will follow J. G. A. Pocock in calling it the ‘civic tradition’, which he characterises as “an intellectual discourse on politics...” (Ibid.: 11) His reasons for choosing this term, rather than ‘civic humanism’ or ‘the Machiavellian tradition’, are that, important though the humanists and Machiavelli were, “the tradition was not to remain fixed in the form they gave it.” (Ibid.: 20, FN. 26)

⁶ Pocock 1971: 85.

Parliament and moved political decision-making to London. This removed formal, institutional opportunities for Scotsmen to participate in Scottish political and public life. This was further compounded by the growth of the Standing Army and the British government's refusal to extend a militia to Scotland. The 1715 and the 1745 Jacobite Rebellions (or Risings, depending on your perspective) created an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust of Scots amongst the English governing class, thus decreasing informal, social opportunities to participate in public and political life. Alongside this new socio-economic forces were impacting on society in three key areas: the increasing bureaucratisation of government and a Standing Army limited opportunities for political participation; the lower orders were made ever-more uncomprehending by the processes of the division of labour; the elite were tempted away from public life by the lures of luxury. Thus it appeared that men in eighteenth century Scotland were increasingly unable, incapable and unwilling to participate militarily or politically.

The writers I focus on certainly all shared concerns that were central to civic humanism: luxury, corruption and a properly constituted polity. I shall be considering in some depth their views on these, including militias and Standing Armies, and the ramifications for political responsibility. However, this is not to claim that they were all civic humanist thinkers. Indeed, Adam Ferguson, who sought to reconfigure civic humanism for the new commercial age, was the only explicitly civic humanist thinker among them. Where Ferguson sought to make civic humanism relevant, others, such as Adam Smith, sought to argue against it and to present a new model of citizenship. But whatever their position, there can be seen in all their works a continuing concern with issues addressed by civic humanism. However, while civic humanist concerns were central for Scottish Enlightenment thinkers, my approach to their views about citizenship will not be limited to considerations of civic humanism and its influence; correspondingly, I will be emphasising central aspects of the citizenship debate that have been largely ignored by other commentators, especially those who adopt a civic humanist interpretation. In particular, I will devote considerable attention to the boundaries of citizenship: who could be a citizen, how and why they qualified for this status. Central to this

was who was *disqualified* from citizenship and on what grounds; hence I shall be addressing issues of political inclusion and exclusion. A central focus of this Thesis will thus be the treatment of women, the lower orders and, to a lesser degree, slaves in these writers' works. Writing on, and attitudes towards, women in this period is a surprisingly neglected area; I will be giving it a weight that is proportional to its position in key texts and inverse to its place in previous commentaries on Scottish Enlightenment writing.

2. Citizenship, exclusion and political responsibility

Thus, this Thesis will address the reconfiguration of citizenship in the eighteenth century. I will do this through an examination of political responsibility. I will use 'political responsibility' as a term to refer to public duty, to the appropriate social and political behaviour binding upon individuals. It is important to note that considerations of political responsibility emphasise how individuals were categorised by others, rather than how they saw themselves, and thus debates about political responsibility addressed elite concerns. The civic humanist ideal of economically independent, educated individuals meant that citizenship was exclusive and limited to a small set of men. Individuals were judged according to their socio-economic status or gender, on whether they were a member of the elite or the lower orders, a man or a woman. The boundaries of citizenship operated to exclude the lower orders and women, to exclude on what we can approximately call class and gender grounds.

It is important to clarify key terms at this point. I will be using the terms 'elite' and 'lower orders' to distinguish between socio-economic groups in society. I will be using these terms, rather than a specifically class-based terminology, both because it is difficult to map modern notions of class on to the past – as well as anachronistic and inappropriate at points – and because they are terms that the thinkers and writers discussed would have recognised and indeed used themselves. The elite – who I will also refer to as the higher orders – were what we would now term 'upper middle class' or 'upper class'. They were wealthy, of 'good' family and well educated. It

was assumed they had no financial need to work and were free to devote themselves to public service. The lower orders – whom I will also refer to as the lower ranks – were what we would now term ‘working class’ or ‘labouring class’. Included in this group were labourers, those in mechanical trades, servants, farm workers and factory workers. Such individuals would have little or no education and little or no financial security. They were expected to contribute to public life on a purely economic level, through labour.

However, these categories applied specifically to men. It is important to note that in addition to distinctions between the elite and the lower orders, the distinction between men and women was central. While women could be of good family, and thus seem to be members of the elite, there was no expectation that *they* should contribute to public life. Although they were becoming more involved in social life they were still firmly excluded from the political realm. Thus, in terms of their status as citizens, women can be considered as always belonging to the lower orders.

Political responsibility can be clarified and illustrated through the concept of ‘political persona’. Political persona encompasses both the role one should play in political life and the qualifications for that role. Political responsibility (and political persona) can be applied to both individuals and nations and raises questions of individual and national identity, inclusion and exclusion. These are reflected in political persona’s two components: *political identity* and *political character*.

Political identity: This refers to the **role** one could or should play in civic life and encompasses two main roles: ‘positive’ (or ‘engaged’) and ‘negative’ (or ‘unengaged’) – the terms ‘active’ and ‘passive’ may also be utilised here. Positive, engaged or active roles (or identities) include those of soldier and politician, which demand direct participation in the polity’s life. Negative, unengaged or passive roles (or identities) are reserved for those who labour in the economic or domestic sphere and such individuals would have no direct role in political life – they would be passive. Concepts of positive and negative political identity illustrate elite expectations of discrete social groups. The elite were expected to do their duty and

actively serve the state; the lower orders were expected to labour, behave and to know their place. However, it is important to stress that both were expected to promote the good of society and the state in their own ways and to have political responsibility. They were to do this in different ways: by positive engagement in the case of the elite, by actively taking part in politics and in civic life; by keeping out of the public realm in the case of the lower orders, passively obeying the law and leaving politics to others.

Political character: This refers to the **traits** and **circumstances** that enable an individual to fulfil their allotted role and to be politically responsible. There are positive traits that enable individuals to be effective and successful soldiers and politicians; positive circumstances that enable individuals to engage with the state. Such positive traits include bravery, fortitude, intelligence and understanding; such positive circumstances include military experience, education and the freedom from the necessity to labour. There are negative traits that disqualify individuals from public life; negative circumstances that hinder or prevent individuals from engaging with the state. Such negative traits include cowardice, ignorance and a lack of understanding; such negative circumstances include a lack of education, time and money. Thus the elite were enabled by positive traits and circumstances – their understanding, education and free time – to engage with the state while the lower orders were disabled by their negative traits and circumstances – their ignorance and occupations.

This way of conceptualising political responsibility will also be helpful in exploring the gender dimension of citizenship debates, which was not merely a matter of excluding women. The issue of ‘traits’ is important here because those traits classified as ‘masculine’ were used, especially by civic humanists, to judge who was and was not qualified to be a citizen. As J. G. A. Pocock has noted, civic humanism is a very ‘manly’ political philosophy: “the male bias of this ideal bordered on the absolute...”⁷ In more general terms, I. M. Young argues that as the modern state has

⁷ ‘Cambridge paradigms and Scotch philosophers: a study of the relations between the civic humanist and the civil jurisprudential interpretation of eighteenth-century thought’, pp.235-252 in Hont and Ignatieff (eds.) 1983: 235.

been founded by men, the public realm of citizenship that accompanied it portrayed as universal what were actually norms derived from specifically male experience: “militaristic norms of honour ... respectful camaraderie and bargaining among independent agents; discourse framed in unemotional terms of dispassionate reason.”⁸ However, there has been little by way of a substantial attempt to explore the ways in which the categories used to characterise citizenship during the Scottish Enlightenment were intensely gendered. Making use of the concept of political persona can enable a clearer understanding of this and its relevance to arguments about citizenship.

As I will argue, two key eighteenth century concerns were with masculinity and effeminacy. Being willing and able to fully and effectively participate in political life was typically defined as masculine and seen as the most virtuous behaviour a man could demonstrate. This masculine model of citizenship excluded not only those involved with domestic concerns (women) but also those who had to labour for a living (the lower orders) and thus most men. Effeminacy could have several meanings – being wanton and oversexed, being womanish and tender – but for civic humanists it was a highly charged political term, signifying those who could not or would not participate in public life, those who sought to evade their proper public duty and political responsibility. It was the basest trait a man could display and marked him out for contempt and scorn. Civic humanism demonised the effeminate and presented the ‘feminine’ as antithetical to the qualities necessary for good citizenship, such as the ability to be impersonal, disinterested, free of burdens and educated. Civic humanism appropriated and categorised as ‘masculine’ traits such as strength, intelligence, rationality, bravery and courage; it deemed as ‘feminine’ traits such as weakness, ignorance, irrationality, timidity and cowardice. Those who displayed masculine traits were to be granted access to the public, political realm; those who displayed feminine traits were to be excluded. While the thinkers I focus

⁸ ‘Polity and Group Difference: A Critique of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship’, pp.401-429 in Phillips (ed.) 1998: 404. She continues: “Extolling a public realm of manly virtue and citizenship as independence, generality and dispassionate reason entailed creating the private sphere of the family as the place to which emotion, sentiment and bodily needs must be confined. The generality of the public thus depends on excluding women, who are responsible for tending to the private realm, and who lack the dispassionate rationality and independence required of good citizens.” (Ibid.: 405)

on were not necessarily civic humanists they were concerned with masculinity and effeminacy; what makes their work particularly interesting are their attempts to understand and reconfigure these concepts in a changing society.

3. Approaching historical thinkers

My approach to the historical material is broadly in line with that of the 'Cambridge School'. This group of writers, such as Quentin Skinner, J. G. A. Pocock and John Dunn, is concerned with developing a proper historical understanding of texts and argues that we can only do so by placing them in their (then) contemporary context. Thus Skinner declares: "My aspiration is not of course to perform the impossible task of getting inside the heads of long-dead thinkers; it is simply to use the ordinary techniques of historical enquiry to grasp their concepts, to follow their distinctions, to recover their beliefs and so far as possible, to see things their way."⁹ He argues that texts have to be understood in their historical and linguistic context. Acknowledging that the author's intention in writing is an important part of the historical meaning of their text, Skinner also suggests that at least some measure of an author's intention can be recovered by placing texts in their relevant conventional linguistic context.

Skinner identifies three particular dangers that must be avoided in studying the history of ideas: the 'mythology of doctrines'; the 'mythology of coherence'; the 'mythology of prolepsis'. The mythology of doctrines refers to the perils of converting scattered or incidental remarks by a theorist into a doctrine on an expected theme, which generates two types of 'historical absurdity': intellectual biography and a focus on the development of some 'unit idea'. As regards intellectual biography, a special danger is that of anachronism: "A given writer may be 'discovered' to have held a view, on the strength of some chance similarity of terminology, on some subject to which he cannot in principle have meant to

⁹ 2002a: vii.

contribute.”¹⁰ In the case of attempts to trace the development of a unit idea, Skinner argues that this leads to two further types of historical absurdity: ‘anticipations’ and questions about whether a given unit idea can be said to have emerged at a given time. The former leads to writing “given over to pointing out earlier ‘anticipations’ of later doctrines, and hence congratulating individual writers for the extent of their clairvoyance.”¹¹ This fails to congratulate them for their contemporary contribution. Skinner is not, of course, the first to criticise such behaviour. When W. R. Scott (who, as Devine writes, was the first, in 1900, to introduce the term ‘Scottish Enlightenment’ to describe the period of intellectual expansion between the 1730s and the 1790s)¹² writes of Hutcheson’s discussion of the division of labour, he comments that it might amuse the reader “who credits writers of monographs with a more or less praiseworthy endeavour to show that their ‘author’ has ‘anticipated’ the largest number of theories.”¹³ Skinner’s latter point, concerning questions about whether a given idea can be said to have emerged at a given time, is concerned with the endless debates over when ideas emerged, such as the separation of powers, resistance theory and popular sovereignty. Arthur Herman, for example, claims that such ideas, traditionally ascribed to John Locke, belong “to a Presbyterian Scot [George Buchanan] from Stirlingshire writing more than a hundred years earlier.”¹⁴

Skinner’s second mythology, that of coherence, is concerned with the consistency of texts. Skinner argues that where texts lack this, it is dangerously easy to see one’s task as supplying it. There is a related assumption that the correct question is not whether there are inconsistencies but how such inconsistencies can be accounted for, with no allowance for the possibility that the authors may have changed their minds or been convinced by opposing arguments over time. Where there appear to be

¹⁰ ‘Meaning and understanding in the history of ideas’, pp.29-67 in Tully (ed.) 1988: 32.

¹¹ Skinner 2002a: 63.

¹² Devine 2003: 175. Scott wrote of Hutcheson, in his 1900 *Francis Hutcheson: His life, teaching and position in the history of philosophy*, that “he may not inaptly be termed a leader in the Scottish Enlightenment.” (1900: 2) Hutcheson was “a Philosopher of the Enlightenment in Scotland.” (Ibid.: 257) Scott noted that the expression ‘Enlightenment’ was commonplace in accounts of German and French philosophy of the last century but was seldom, if ever, used in reference to Scotland. The Scottish Enlightenment was “the diffusion of philosophical ideas in Scotland and the encouragement of speculative tastes amongst the men of culture...” (Ibid.: 265)

¹³ Scott 1900: 235. However, he then goes on to do just that: “Hutcheson anticipates Adam Smith’s claims for the advantages of the Division of Labour...” (Ibid.: 237)

¹⁴ 2003: 18.

inconsistencies in writers' works I have sought to clarify where they are actually inconsistencies and where opinions have changed over time. For example, Smith argues in favour of a militia in his 1760s *Lectures on Jurisprudence* but against it in his 1776 *Wealth of Nations*. This may appear to be an inconsistency but the *Wealth* is a later and more considered work in which Smith has changed his mind. It is to ensure that I present a fair picture of a thinker's views that I have studied the whole body of work as far as possible. We cannot fully understand a thinker's views or accurately portray them unless we consider the body of work as a whole, rather than examining individual texts.

Skinner's third mythology, that of prolepsis, is generated "when we are more interested in the retrospective significance of a given episode than in its meaning for the agent at the time."¹⁵ An example of this is the many commentaries on Ferguson and Smith's treatment of the division of labour and their discussion of alienation, too often studied not for what it meant to them and how they used it in their work but for its influence on later thinkers. This is exemplified by Douglas Young: "The concept of *alienation*, as it takes shape in the works of Adam Smith and Adam Ferguson particularly ... is perhaps one of the most important contributions of the Scottish intellect to European consciousness."¹⁶ My focus will be on the contemporary reception of ideas and how they impacted on the immediate intellectual climate, not future generations. I would agree with Skinner when he argues that texts deserve to be read and examined on their own merits, not because of what they can tell us about our time. "The very fact, it seems to me, that the classic texts are concerned with their own problems, and not necessarily with ours, is what gives them their 'relevance'..."¹⁷ Texts do not have to illustrate 'perennial problems' but can help to reveal "the variety of moral assumptions and political commitments."¹⁸

¹⁵ 2002a: 73.

¹⁶ 'Introduction', pp.7-13 in Young et al 1967: 13. Italics in original.

¹⁷ 2002a: 88.

¹⁸ Ibid.

In more general terms, Skinner argues that it is important to place texts in their proper historical and linguistic context. Of course, he would not want to claim that he was the first to propound this contextual approach. However, it is perhaps surprising to discover that a similar approach was articulated by Gershom Carmichael, one of the thinkers I will be examining, nearly three hundred years earlier. I have found Carmichael's work particularly useful not only as it gives a clear guide to how he wished his own work to be understood but also because it provides, in effect, a contemporary methodology for analysing Scottish Enlightenment works. I find it particularly appropriate to utilise contemporary tools to understand contemporary thought. Carmichael outlines an historically and linguistically sensitive approach to textual analysis in his 1722 *A Short Introduction to Logic*. He begins by defining logic as "*the science which exhibits the method of discovering the truth and expounding it to others...*"¹⁹ The 'truth', in this context, can be understood as an accurate understanding of key texts. He goes on to argue that any piece of investigative writing needs to be prefaced by something on "the utility, dignity, and agreeableness of the writing itself, but in such a way that we always stay within the bounds of the truth."²⁰ This was to be followed by 'analysis', the aim of which was to recover the author's intention in writing, which could be done through 'external' and 'internal' means. Amongst the external means (or historical context) were that we should take into account who is writing; what they were writing about; why they were writing, their intentions and ends; the intended audience; the occasion of writing; what went before. The internal means (or linguistic context) were lexicons, grammars and rhetoric.

We can see clear parallels between Carmichael and the Cambridge School, differences of terminology notwithstanding. Both stress the importance of considering a text in its context and of recognising commonly used linguistic conventions and shared evaluative meanings. Carmichael argues that we should weigh the occasion of discourse and consider whether comments are premeditated or

¹⁹ 'A Short Introduction to Logic: an elementary textbook for students of philosophy (particularly at the University of Glasgow). Second Edition. Revised and corrected by the author', pp.289-317 in Moore and Silverthorne (eds.) 2002: 292. Italics in original.

²⁰ Ibid.: 316.

accidental. He warns: "Corollaries or conclusions deduced from the doctrine as expounded are sometimes annexed to an analysis, but one must be careful that their consequences are quite evident. It would certainly be very unfair to ascribe a conclusion to any author as his own, of which the author himself might question whether it follows from the doctrine he has taught."²¹ Skinner argues in a similar vein (especially when articulating concerns about the mythology of doctrines) when he states that "historians have no option but to begin by assuming that what people actually talk about provides us with the most reliable guide to their beliefs. To begin by insisting that they really must be talking about something else is to run the highest risk of supplying them with beliefs instead of identifying what they believed."²²

Although Skinner discusses the historical approach in more depth all the key features can be found in Carmichael's work. Influenced by both, I will work on the assumption that we cannot understand the Scottish Enlightenment without understanding the historical background and contemporary circumstances. The Scottish Enlightenment did not come out of the ether, nor was it merely part of a Europe-wide Enlightenment (although this was an influence) and Scottish Enlightenment thinkers and writers were part of a continuing debate on political responsibility. Integral to this debate were key concerns of civic humanism, challenged and reconfigured over the course of time. The aim of studying these writers' work "is to see such texts as contributions to particular discourses, and thereby to recognise the ways in which they followed or challenged or subverted the conventional terms of these discourses themselves."²³

4. Structure of the Thesis

This particular historical approach obviously affects the structure of the Thesis and the choice of material. Four key points of importance from this approach to the historical material are: the necessity to consider Scottish history – exemplified here

²¹ Ibid.: 317.

²² 2002a: 51.

²³ Ibid.: 125.

by an exploration of the contribution and significance of James VI/I and the Scottish Witch-hunt and women; the necessity to take a wide view and consider who Scottish Enlightenment thinkers were influenced by – exemplified here by a consideration of the work of Carmichael and Hutcheson; the necessity to consider the whole body of work rather than individual texts; the necessity to locate citizenship debates in a broader context – exemplified here by a consideration of literary responses to the commercial challenge. While briefly outlining these points I will also provide a general outline of this Thesis.

Scottish history, James VI/I and the Scottish Witch-hunt and women: Scottish Enlightenment debates on political responsibility were informed by Scottish political history and particular Scottish circumstances and so a knowledge of these is essential. As I will argue, the Scottish Enlightenment was a particularly Scottish phenomenon. I would agree with Christopher Whatley that “the Scottish Enlightenment ... was patriotic, built on intellectual foundations which preceded the Union, its concerns shaped by the economic and social context in which it came to fruition.”²⁴ Although it is important to acknowledge the connections with mainland Europe and European thought, I would agree with Devine when he argues that “the indigenous strains in the cultural process were also central.”²⁵ Given this, it is necessary to give a brief exposition of Scottish history and consider the important social, political and cultural influences on the eighteenth century Enlightenment, which I will do in Part One, Chapter 1, ‘Scotland after 1560’. While focussing on Scottish history, where necessary there will be reference to more general British history.

In Part One, Chapter 2, ‘James VI/I and Women’, I will focus on two particular areas: the treatment of and reaction to James VI/I and the treatment of women, in particular during the witch-hunt, and changing attitudes on their role in society. A consideration of the treatment of and reaction to James VI/I demonstrates the longevity of concerns over masculinity, effeminacy and political responsibility. James himself contributed to debates on political responsibility and provoked

²⁴ 2000: 120.

²⁵ 2003: 176.

discussion on this from others. As noted earlier, I believe attitudes to women are too little considered in previous commentaries on the Scottish Enlightenment and we can trace changing attitudes through the writing of James VI/I, John Knox and David Hume. Any discussion of political responsibility and citizenship necessitates a consideration of inclusion and exclusion and the treatment of James and of women demonstrates the history of excluding those who were adjudged, according to their traits, to be 'unsuitable' for citizenship and what constituted suitability.

Carmichael and Hutcheson: Scottish Enlightenment thinkers were influenced by and in discussion with those who had been before them and it is for this reason that I have considered Gershom Carmichael and Francis Hutcheson's work at the beginning of the eighteenth century, in Part Two, Chapter 3. Carmichael and Hutcheson are two thinkers too little considered in any assessment of Scottish Enlightenment social and political writing but, as I will argue, they were important contributors.

A note may be added about the period this Thesis covers. Devine writes that W. R. Scott introduced the term 'Scottish Enlightenment' in 1900 to describe the period between the 1730s and the 1790s when, he argued, there was an intellectual explosion.²⁶ Alexander Broadie broadly agrees with these dates, defining the Scottish Enlightenment as "the extraordinary flowering of culture which took place in the six decades up to the mid-eighties of the eighteenth century."²⁷ However, I see the Scottish Enlightenment as a process, not an event, and so it is necessary to have a broader understanding of it in terms of time. My focus is on the post-Union period and I argue that Carmichael and Hutcheson, two thinkers usually characterised as grandfather or father of the Scottish Enlightenment, need instead to be considered as part of it.

Considering the whole body of work: Just as thinkers have to be considered as part of a debate, texts have to be considered as part of a body of work. When discussing texts I have sought, where relevant, to include as much of a thinker's work as

²⁶ 2003: 175.

²⁷ 1990: 1.

possible. Carmichael argues that one should take account of what went before, what came after and parallel passages in a writer's work, as "dark passages may be illuminated by relevant passages which are clearer."²⁸ While, where possible, I have done this for all the thinkers it is particularly relevant to Ferguson and Smith, as I will show in Part Two, Chapters 4 and 5. Too often Scottish Enlightenment thinkers are judged on one text – Ferguson and his 1767 *Essay on the History of Civil Society*, for example – or their works are considered separately and the relation between them ignored – Smith's 1759 *Theory of Moral Sentiments* and the 1776 *Wealth of Nations*, for example. To do this ignores much of relevance and interest and hinders any deeper understanding of the work. I have also sought, where possible, to include diaries, letters, contemporary biographies, autobiographies and histories to put a thinker's work into a larger context and to assess its contemporary reception.

Literary responses to the commercial challenge: A related area of contextualisation is the breadth of material I have used to consider the eighteenth century reconfiguration of citizenship. A particular focus is on Scottish literary responses to the commercial challenge, as seen in Part Three, Chapters 6, 7 and 8. Devine writes that one of the Scottish Enlightenment's distinctive features was the depth and range of the creative dynamic which spanned several areas.²⁹ While political philosophy is obviously an important resource, intellectual curiosity was by no means confined to political and philosophical works and I have, therefore, used contemporary journalism and fiction to give a fuller picture of contemporary debates. This extends the traditional boundaries of the citizenship debate as journals, poetry, plays and novels were used to reach different audiences. As noted earlier, political responsibility can be applied to nations and this will be particularly seen in James Macpherson and Walter Scott's work. In Chapter 6, I will consider James Macpherson and Ossian. In Chapter 7, I will consider Henry Mackenzie's work, both novels and journalism. His journals *The Mirror* and *The Lounger* illustrate contemporary concerns as, as Mackenzie notes,

²⁸ 'A Short Introduction to Logic: an elementary textbook for students of philosophy (particularly at the University of Glasgow). Second Edition. Revised and corrected by the author', pp.289-317 in Moore and Silverthorne (eds.) 2002: 316.

²⁹ 2003: 176.

“[t]he writers of newspapers are the historians of the day...”³⁰ In Chapter 8, I will consider Walter Scott’s literary contribution to citizenship debates.

In Conclusion: While this Thesis is primarily an interpretive work, implicit throughout is the question of how successful these thinkers’ attempts to reconfigure citizenship for a commercial age were, and whether it was possible to reconfigure civic humanism for this new age. This is an issue that will be directly addressed in the Conclusion. Alongside this, I will consider the boundaries of the Scottish Enlightenment. I will assess what an extension of the Scottish Enlightenment in terms both of period and of material adds to our understanding of political responsibility.

Finally, I have also included a ‘Coda’ that assesses women’s writing on social and political boundaries. Here, I discuss the work of writers and thinkers such as Bathsua Makin, Mary Astell, ‘Sophia’, Catharine Macaulay and Mary Wollstonecraft. These were not, of course, Scottish thinkers nor can their inclusion be justified on contextual grounds. However, in a Thesis which is concerned with issues of inclusion and exclusion (particularly that of women and of those judged too feminine or effeminate) and given that, to the best of my knowledge, there were no Scottish women writers providing a challenge to dominant discourses, it seemed appropriate to give a ‘voice’ to the excluded. These writers argued against the social and political exclusion of women and for the extension of education to women to make them more responsible members of society. They too were concerned with political responsibility but, instead of applying it to exclude women, sought to expand it to include them. Furthermore, we can see in Wollstonecraft’s work her concerns with citizenship and political responsibility, which are a clear indicator of her civic humanism. She argues from a clearly civic humanist perspective, with her concern with luxury, corruption and a Standing Army, but like Scottish Enlightenment thinkers, sought to reconfigure the tradition, in particular our understanding of the terms ‘masculine’, ‘feminine’ and ‘effeminate’.

³⁰ Mirror No. 75, 25/1/1780 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 3: 8.

Timeline of Scottish and British Rulers

Rulers of Scotland:

House of Stuart

1542 – 1567 Mary, Queen of Scots

1567 – 1603 James VI

Rulers of Scotland and England:

House of Stuart

1603 – 1625 James VI/I

1625 – 1649 – Charles I

Commonwealth and Protectorate

1649 – 1653 Council of State

1653 – 1658 Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector

1658 – 1659 Richard Cromwell, Lord Protector

House of Stuart (restored)

1660 – 1685 Charles II

1685 – 1688 James VII/II

1689 – 1694 William III/II and Mary I

1694 – 1702 William III/II

1702 – 1707 Anne

Rulers of Britain:

House of Stuart

1707 – 1714 Anne

House of Hanover

1714 – 1727 George I

1727 – 1760 George II

1760 – 1801 George III

Rulers of the United Kingdom of Britain and Ireland:

House of Hanover

1801 – 1820 George III

1820 – 1830 George IV

1830 – 1837 William IV

Timeline of important events

- 1542 - Death of James V of Scotland; accession of Mary, Queen of Scots.
- 1548 - Mary, Queen of Scots sent to France.
- 1558 - Accession of Elizabeth I to the English throne.
- 1561 - Mary, Queen of Scots returns to Scotland after the death of her mother, Mary of Guise, who had acted as Regent.
- 1566 - Birth of James VI/I.
- 1567 - Mary, Queen of Scots abdicates Scottish throne; James VI/I accedes to Scottish throne.
- 1567-1573 - Civil War between the Protestant Lords of the Congregation and Mary's Catholic supporters.
- 1586 - James VI/I signs a treaty with England and accepts a regular subsidy from Elizabeth I.
- 1603 - Death of Elizabeth I; James VI/I accedes to English throne – the Union of Crowns.
- 1610 - Episcopacy replaces the Presbyterian form of church government.
- 1625 - Death of James VI/I; Charles I accedes to the Scottish and English thrones.
- 1638 - Scottish National Covenant; the re-establishment of Presbyterianism.
- 1639-1660 – British Civil Wars.
- 1639 - First Bishops' War; England defeated by the Scots.
- 1640 - Second Bishops' War; England defeated by the Scots.
- 1642-1646 – 'The First Civil War'.
- 1642 - Charles I raises his standard at Nottingham; the beginning of the conflict in England.
- 1643 - The Solemn League and Covenant.
- 1646 - Charles I surrenders to the Scots, who return him to the English Parliament.
- 1647 - Peace talks with Charles I stall; Charles seized by the English Army.
- 1648 - 'The Second Civil War' – English and Scottish royalist forces defeated.
- 1649 - Charles I executed.
- 1649-1660 – The Interregnum.
- 1653-1660 – Cromwellian Union.

1658 - Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector, dies; Richard Cromwell replaces him.
1660 - Restoration of Charles II.
1666 - The Pentland Rising.
1685 - Death of Charles II; accession of James VII/II.
1688-1689 – The ‘Glorious Revolution’.
1689 - The crown is settled on William III/II and Mary II; the Darien expedition.
1690 - Episcopacy abolished in Scotland.
1702 - Death of William III/II; accession of Anne.
1707 - The Act of Union between Scotland and England.
1714 - Death of Anne: accession of George I.
1715 - The first Jacobite Rebellion.
1745-1746 – The second Jacobite Rebellion.
1746 - Battle of Culloden on 16/4.
1832 - The Great Reform Act.

Part One: Historical Context

Chapter One: Scotland after 1560

1. Scottish History

It is essential to understand Scottish history in order to properly understand the Scottish Enlightenment.³¹ It should be no surprise that there was a reconsideration of civic humanist concerns in the eighteenth century, given Scotland's turbulent history. There was a drastic difference between the Scotland of the sixteenth century and of the eighteenth century. In the early sixteenth century Scotland was:

a backward country with less than half a million people, its formal independence only a century old and economically on the far northern periphery of the commercial revolution transforming Mediterranean Europe. Politically it was highly unstable. Its new line of Stewart kings faced massive baronial insubordination and barely survived a century-long succession of assassinations and kidnappings.³²

³¹ I have tried to present as neutral as possible a picture of Scottish and British history. A. J. Youngson's 1996 *The Prince and the Pretender: Two views of the '45* demonstrates how the 'right' selection of historical fact and opinion can bias the reader. For example, a Hanoverian account of the Stuarts: "James I was dull and sententious (although his wife Anne was one of the best customers that the London jewellers had ever had); Charles I, although he showed much nobility of character, combined obstinacy with irresolution and ended on the losing side in a civil war; Charles II was a consummate politician whom no writer has ever been able to describe as a man of high principle; while James II, after three far from glorious years, found himself so unpopular that he deemed it advisable to slip out of his kingdom one dark December evening and leave his crown and his subjects to their fate. He was succeeded by William of Orange ... [who] in his turn was succeeded by his sister-in-law Anne, a grand-daughter of Charles I. Anne bore seventeen children, all of whom died, and it is difficult not to feel sorry for her; but she seems to have been a most unlikeable person ... sly, malicious and unreliable." (1996: 37/38) And a Jacobite account of the Hanoverians: "George I was born in Hanover and died there, which was reasonable enough because his interest in British problems was approximately nil. He is otherwise remembered chiefly for his meanness, his disgraceful treatment of his wife, his vulgar tastes, his vulgar German mistresses, and his reliance on indifferent Latin when he had to talk to his ministers. George II, who did not leave Hanover until he was well over thirty, was not much of an improvement. On the battle-field he did well ... But his intellectual abilities were moderate, and his sympathies were entirely Hanoverian. His effectiveness as a King can be judged by his observation that 'ministers are the king in this country' and by his reputation for parsimony, carried to such lengths as made his father – whom he detested – seem generous. So far had the British monarchy fallen. Those who looked back to the nobility and splendid bearing of Charles I or the wit and matchless political capabilities of his son must have wondered what the nation had done to deserve two such little kings as George I and George II." (Ibid.: 162)

³² Foster, 'Scottish Nationality and the Origins of Capitalism', pp.19-62 in Dickson (ed.) 1980: 20.

One of the most significant occurrences during this time period was the Scottish Reformation, the religious renewal movement of the sixteenth century that resulted in the creation of the Protestant church and produced the present Presbyterian Church. It rose from a series of acts of defiance against the Crown and state: against Mary, Queen of Scots in the 1560s; against Charles I after 1637; against James VII/II in the 1680s.³³ There was a regular turnover of monarchs in sixteenth century Scotland. James V died in 1542 and his daughter, Mary, Queen of Scots, became queen at six days old. Her mother, Mary of Guise, ruled as Regent until her death in 1560, which left Scotland in a highly volatile state. Mary returned to Scotland from France in 1561 but her own rule was turbulent and in 1567 she abdicated in favour of her year-old son James VI/I.³⁴ Scotland was governed by a series of Regents until James reached his majority. His rule saw the Union of Crowns in 1603, when he inherited the English throne from Elizabeth I. From this point Scotland's history would be inextricably linked with that of England. On James' death in 1625 his son Charles I inherited the thrones of Scotland and England.

Charles has been criticised for his role in the British Civil Wars and portrayed as an absolute tyrant but this is simplistic.³⁵ The struggle cannot merely be characterised as good guys versus bad guys and Charles should not be seen as "the villain in a moral tale about the struggle for liberty against tyranny."³⁶ That said, Charles' personal qualities did not help. He was a taciturn man, bad at communicating with others, argumentative and stubborn. Natural qualities, perhaps, in an absolute monarch but distinctly unhelpful in the fraught conditions he had to deal with. Michael B. Young

³³ The Scottish Reformation, like the Scottish Enlightenment, was not an event but a process, driven in its early stages largely by the will of John Knox, 1513-1572, who wanted the Scots to be God's chosen people. Historians have argued over Knox's contribution to Scottish life but one unquestionably positive legacy was Scotland's literacy rate. Knox's 1560 *Book of Discipline* had called for a national system of education to enable all to be able to read God's word. Schools were established in every parish, with teachers paid an acceptable salary. A 1616 Act of the Privy Council stated the government aim of establishing a separate school for each parish; a 1633 Act of Parliament made landowners pay for the endowment of schools. Scotland's literacy rates would be higher than England's until the 1880s.

³⁴ James VI/I, 1566-1625, king of Scotland 1567-1625, king of England 1603-1625.

³⁵ The British Civil Wars are sometimes referred to as the 'English Civil War' but *all* parts of the British Isles were involved. Charles I ruled over multiple kingdoms and the Civil Wars have to be viewed as a British, not just English, phenomenon. This is in contrast to the views of historians such as Laurence Stone: "the English Civil War was one of the few in modern history whose outcome was not powerfully influenced by foreign powers (except Scotland)." (1972: 79)

³⁶ Michael B. Young 1997: 9.

argues that Charles took any chance he could 'to pick a fight'. This can be seen in the 1630s conflict with the Scots, a major catalyst of the British Civil Wars. One of Charles' problems in Scotland was that he was an 'absentee landlord'. His first visit to Scotland as an adult was in 1633 for his coronation; he had no regular meetings with his Scottish Privy Council; he alienated many of the Scottish nobles and was too removed from the situation to make informed judgements. He thought he could impose a new form of worship on Scotland with the 1637 Prayer Book but he was wrong. This led to the 1638 Covenant and the identification in Scotland of episcopacy with English attempts to control and dominate Scottish affairs. What had started as a religious argument would soon become a political and national one. Many of Charles' policies had been unpopular but there had been little collective resistance. This would not be the case with the Covenanters.³⁷ "There soon followed the First Bishops' War, the Second Bishops' War and the Civil War – year after year of needless, ruinous war."³⁸ After the disastrous Bishops' Wars he was forced to call a Parliament in 1640, the first time since 1629, and make concessions for their support. The Covenanters' army, though small and consisting of poorly armed volunteers, had defeated Charles' forces and forced him to sue for peace. This resistance to the rule of an absolute monarch signalled the start of the British Civil Wars:

The Bishops' War ... revealed the flimsiness of Stuart rule, and encouraged the Parliament in London to defy Charles in turn. A civil war ensued, which ... would destroy for ever the façade of absolute monarchy in Britain. A new political idea, that of government with the consent of the governed, had arrived. But it took its original impulse from the Scottish Covenanters.³⁹

³⁷ The Covenanters was the name given to those adhering to the various Covenants in the Scottish Reformation, in particular those resisting the reintroduction of episcopacy to Scotland. The 1638 Covenant, which committed supporters to restoring the purity of the Kirk, attracted signatures nationwide with a vast majority of Scottish nobles and clergy signing up. This rejection of episcopacy in favour of Presbyterianism became a Scottish manifesto throughout the 1640s and was also a rallying point for opposition post-Restoration. During the 1666 Pentland Rising nearly 1,000 Covenanters marched on Edinburgh but were defeated by government forces; this resulted in harsher government policy towards Covenanters. However, after the 1688/1689 'Glorious Revolution' episcopacy was abolished in Scotland.

³⁸ Michael B. Young 2000: 114.

³⁹ Herman 2003: 20.

During the 1630s Charles' rule had become increasingly unpopular but he had had little difficulty keeping control until his Scottish defeat. He had been visibly and embarrassingly beaten by a supposedly lesser force and was unable to impose his will on one of his kingdoms. This was not supposed to happen to an absolute monarch.⁴⁰ This weakening of Charles' authority allowed the English Parliament to extract significant concessions but the situation remained tense. Charles was not generally trusted and a crisis came in 1642 over control of the army. Parliament was divided and two groups formed – a Parliamentary group directing a war against the king at Westminster and a Parliamentary group for the king at Oxford.⁴¹ The Westminster Parliament entered into an unstable alliance with the Scottish army against the king and 1642-1646 saw the first Civil War. The recently formed New Model Army (NMA) defeated Charles' forces but Charles refused to compromise or negotiate seriously and this led to the second Civil War in the spring/summer of 1648.⁴² The NMA defeated the English and Scottish royalists; Charles was captured and tried and executed in January 1649. Oliver Cromwell, now in charge of the NMA, turned his attention to the Scottish army who supported Charles' son, the future Charles II, overcame their resistance and took control of the British mainland.⁴³ Cromwell held onto power, as Lord Protector, until his death in 1658 but there was no effective successor - his son Richard became Lord Protector but could

⁴⁰ There are, of course, problems of perception here, with differing versions of the 'truth'. The Scots saw themselves as defending national interests; the Covenanters saw themselves as God's warriors; Charles saw himself as a legitimate ruler whose subjects were rebelling.

⁴¹ Charles' queen, Henrietta Maria, once admonished him for referring to his enemies as 'Parliament' and she made an important point. Whilst it is customary to refer to Charles' English opponents as 'Parliament' or 'Parliamentarians' and characterise the Civil Wars as king versus Parliament this ignores the fact that many members of Parliament fought on Charles' side. At least 2/5ths of the House of Commons and an overwhelming majority of the House of Lords sided with Charles. "It is astounding how few textbooks bother to make this basic distinction. None, of course, calls the king's enemies rebels, though that is in fact what they were. Just as it dignifies the rebels in Scotland to call them Covenanters, so does it dignify the rebels in England to call them Parliamentarians." (Michael B. Young 1997: 153)

⁴² The NMA broke with traditional practice in several ways, one important one being that it was maintained in peacetime. It was a Standing Army, a military force permanently embodied. Standing Armies were a bete noir for civic humanists, who argued they were a force for domestic oppression and an instrument of executive tyranny. Charles II and James VII/II would maintain royal guards which were seen by critics as a Standing Army. The 1689 Bill of Rights stated there would be no peacetime Standing Army without Parliamentary consent.

⁴³ Oliver Cromwell, 1599-1658, statesman and Lord Protector 1653-1658; Charles II, 1630-1685.

not hold onto power.⁴⁴ Charles II had been in secret negotiations with key elements of the governing elite and was restored to the throne in 1660.

Charles II is remembered as a tolerable king by many English historians but Scots gave the 1660s and 1670s the name of 'the Killing Time', due to Charles' brutal behaviour in persecuting the Covenanters. In Scotland and England alike there was a cycle of religious persecution and popular resistance after the Restoration which, combined with other problems such as the plague, trade dislocations, bad harvests and financial crisis, made Scotland a disruptive and disrupted country. Charles' brother James, Duke of York, was Lord High Commissioner for Scotland and was harsh on any dissent.⁴⁵ Since Charles had no legitimate children James was heir presumptive which was problematic as he was a Catholic. 'The Rye House Plot' and 'Monmouth's Rebellion' were two reactions but James succeeded to the throne as James VII/II in 1685.⁴⁶ He managed to keep control for a period but a crisis came in 1688 when a male heir was born – James Edward Stuart (who would be best known as the 'Old Pretender'). Various conspirators invited James' Protestant son-in-law, William of Orange, to intervene and he invaded in November.⁴⁷ James fled London but was captured and 'encouraged' to leave for France, which opened the way for William to assume power and for the institution of the series of constitutional changes which became known as the 'Glorious Revolution'. William did not want to serve as Regent or let his wife Mary rule alone so Parliament offered the crown to them both as joint monarchs in February 1689, with the Scottish Parliament following suit. William III/II and Mary II's rule was welcomed by many Scots as the Kirk regained its independence and Presbyterianism was re-established. Prominent Scots who had been with William in The Hague included William Carstairs and

⁴⁴ There are intriguing similarities between Richard Cromwell, 1626-1712, and Charles I. Both were sons of strong men who, despite intense criticism, held disparate forces together; both were men who could not live up to their fathers; both were men who could not hold onto power.

⁴⁵ James VII/II, 1633-1701.

⁴⁶ The 'Rye House Plot' was a plan in 1683 to assassinate Charles II and James on their return from Newmarket to London (by blocking the road at a narrow passage at the Rye House near Hoddesdon, Herts). 'Monmouth's Rebellion', in 1685, was in support of James Scott, first Duke of Monmouth (and illegitimate son of Charles II), in preference to James. Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun would play a small part in this.

⁴⁷ William had sent troops to help James put down 'Monmouth's Rebellion' but when approached about replacing him was tempted; he and his forces landed on 5/11/1688.

Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun.⁴⁸ Carstares, who had been tortured for his part in the 'Rye House Plot', had been William's chaplain and went on to be both Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and Principal of the University of Edinburgh.

Although William and Mary may have been welcomed by the elite, the first decade of their rule in Scotland was called 'the ill years' by the majority due to the failure of the government to mitigate the effect of a series of disastrous harvests, the Glencoe Massacre and Darien.⁴⁹ The Darien disaster would be the most costly single enterprise, both in terms of lives and money, in Scottish history. In 1696, the Scottish Parliament legislated for a public chartered corporation to create an overseas Scottish trading post. On 23/6/1696 the Scottish Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Trade agreed to William Paterson's proposal to use this corporation to found a Scottish colony in Panama, on the Isthmus of Darien. As Walter Scott argued, the proposal was popular with many:

particularly with the Scottish administration, who were greatly embarrassed at the time by the warm prosecution of the affair of Glencoe, and who easily persuaded King William that some freedom and facilities of trade granted to the Scots, would divert the public attention from the investigation of a matter, not very creditable to his majesty's reputation any more than to their own.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ William Carstares, 1649-1715, Royal Chaplain for Scotland, nicknamed 'the Cardinal' for his power and influence; Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun, 1655-1716, politician and author.

⁴⁹ Harvests were particularly bad in 1695, 1696 and 1688-99. This created famine conditions during which between 5% and 15% of the population died, perhaps as much as 25% in the north-east. William was criticised and blamed as an 'absentee landlord': "as the irascible Fletcher of Saltoun said, she [Scotland] was 'a farm managed by servants and not under the eye of the master.'" (Mitchison 1970: 304)

The Glencoe Massacre took place on 13/2/1692 near Lochaber. The MacDonalds of Glencoe took an Oath of Allegiance to William III/II after the agreed deadline and the Campbells, their rivals for influence, used this as an excuse to launch an attack. They were supported and encouraged by John Dalrymple, Secretary of State for Scotland. Thirty-eight people were killed in this act of state-sponsored violence. Mitchison comments that "when a seventeenth century government felt strong enough to act in the Highlands it acted by fire and sword and indiscriminate slaughter." (Ibid.: 287) The same policy would be adopted by 'Butcher' Cumberland and the British government after the '45. Adam Ferguson's father, the Rev. Adam Ferguson, was well remembered by his parishioners for sheltering MacDonalds fleeing the massacre.

⁵⁰ 1872: 673.

The plan received popular, as well as elite, support and raised £400,000 in a few months, almost half the total money in circulation in Scotland. Although people invested to make a profit there was also an element of national pride involved, a desire to demonstrate what Scotland could achieve. Such desires were disappointed as Darien was a colossal failure. The five ships that left Leith on 17/6/1697 (arriving at the Bay of Darien on 3/11/1697) were under-equipped with food and tools, the passengers ill-prepared for the conditions ahead. When stores were checked, it was discovered that they only had supplies for six months, not nine, and the English, from their bases in Jamaica and Havana, prevented them from buying more. Walter Scott argued that the English were riled by the Scots attempt at commercial independence: "it was embarrassing and provoking to find [Scotland] displaying, in spite of its proverbial caution, a hardy and ambitious spirit of emulating them in the paths of commerce."⁵¹ Fever broke out on the mosquito-infected coast and, due to insufficient preparation and medication, would kill twelve settlers a day at its peak. Morale sank, drunkenness increased and discipline disappeared. To this was added an aggressive Spanish policy, reasserting its claim to Darien as part of Panama. The few surviving Scots sailed home in July 1699. Scotland, already damaged by bad harvests, was in serious trouble and there were two reactions. Some blamed the English for exacerbating the situation; even the staunchly Unionist Scott took this position when discussing the colonists:

Famine aided the distress which swept them off in large numbers; and undoubtedly they, who thus perished for want of the provisions for which they were willing to pay, were as much murdered by King William's Government, as if they had been shot in the snows of Glencoe.⁵²

Others called for Union with England as a way of healing wounds and getting access to her trading markets. Union between Scotland and England had been a dream of James VI/I; it would become a reality in 1707. Much has been written on the Union and the practical details need not over-concern us. Darien had brought home the realities of Scotland's economic situation – to conduct any overseas trade

⁵¹ Ibid.: 675.

⁵² Ibid.: 680.

successfully Scotland needed English acquiescence. It also clarified the king's interests. As T. M. Devine argues, Darien served notice of the Union of Crowns: "It proved conclusively that when the vital interests of Scotland and England were in conflict, the monarch would always opt to support the position of the more powerful kingdom."⁵³ Under the aegis of Queen Anne negotiations began for a Treaty of Union. Various Scottish and English motivations have been suggested: Scottish political independence traded for access to English colonial markets; impetus from an expansive English state with greater military might; the promise of protection in the market by the English; greater political stability; the weakening of the power of tyrannical Scottish nobles – prosperity and freedom combined.⁵⁴ Whatever the reason, Scotland and England, who had been in a regal political union since 1603, would now be in a commercial union. The relationship had become unworkable for both sides and needed to be clarified. Negotiations were concluded, a Union was agreed and the last meeting of the Scottish Parliament was held on 28/4/1707.⁵⁵ James VI/I had wanted union between Scotland and England, arguing that he was the husband and the whole isle his wife. Rosalind Mitchison picks up this metaphor and draws a parallel between union and marriage:

It [negotiations] was like a quarrel within a marriage. Each side had done the most they could to hurt each other, and for the same reason that quarrels within the bonds of marriage are worse than those outside, because the partners are fighting not only against each other but against the fact of the marriage that holds them together.⁵⁶

Insults were swapped but once the shouting was over both partners could try and move forward together. "When husband and wife have finished throwing insults and crockery at each other they can sometimes give real consideration to improving the

⁵³ 2003: 47.

⁵⁴ It is often argued that economic considerations were the main factor for the Scots. Mitchison, for examples, argues: "The Scots did not go into the Union simply because they were poor and saw no other way of riches, but because they were poor and rapidly getting poorer." (1970: 311) This view is supported by the fact that economic arrangements were a crucial part of the Treaty of Union, with Articles 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 14 and 15 (amongst others) concerning fiscal matters.

⁵⁵ The Scottish Parliament was dissolved; the Scots would send sixteen Peers and forty-five M.P.s to the Westminster Parliament.

⁵⁶ 1970: 307.

basis of their relationship.”⁵⁷ There were those on both sides who objected – Scots who wanted to hold on to what independence they had, English who had, as Walter Scott argued, “a narrow minded view of the commercial interests of the nation, and a fear of the loss which might accrue by admitting the Scots to a share of their plantation trade, and other privileges.”⁵⁸ But resistance was futile; Union was inevitable.

There were those who did not support the Union, as witnessed by aborted Jacobite rebellions in 1708, 1719 and 1752/3, as well as the '15 and '45. The '15 was provoked by perceived affronts to the Kirk and the limitation of the power and influence of the Scottish nobles. The immediate impetus was anger over the 1713 attempt to extend the English level of malt tax to Scotland, a technical breach of Union agreements and an issue that could unite all classes. The elite protested over breach of promise; the lower orders because malt and salt taxes affected them the most. Scots in the Westminster Parliament called for the repeal of the Union and there was some degree of Jacobite plotting. The Protestant George I had taken the throne in 1714, cutting out the stronger hereditary claim of the Catholic Stuarts and this had exacerbated the situation.⁵⁹ John Erskine, the 6th Earl of Mar, was central, gathering an army of 10,000/12,000 and waiting for James Stuart.⁶⁰ However, James Stuart's arrival was delayed, the government moved against them and Mar's forces could not hold. The '45 was a more successful affair, led by James Stuart's son

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ 1872: 692.

⁵⁹ The Electors of Hanover had gained the title to the British throne by the Act of Settlement in 1701 as the closest Protestant in the line of succession. George Ludwig of Hanover took the throne as George I on Anne's death in 1714.

⁶⁰ James Francis Edward Stuart, 1688-1766, claimant to the British throne as the son of James VII/II, known as 'the Old Pretender'. He was excluded from succession by the Act of Settlement. John Erskine, 6th Earl of Mar, 1675-1732. Erskine had been a Commissioner for Union, Secretary of State for Scotland and a Scottish Peer but by 1713 favoured repeal of the Union. He was nicknamed 'Bobbing John' for his changes of loyalty. In 1715 he returned to Scotland, declared James Stuart king at Braemar on 8/9/1715 and took command of the Jacobite forces. However, he was an indecisive commander and was defeated by a smaller force at the battle of Sheriffmuir on 13/11/1715. He went into exile with James. Scott gave Erskine a kind epitaph: "It would be unjust to the memory of the unfortunate Mar, not to acquit him of cowardice or treachery, but his genius lay for the intrigues of a court, not the labours of a campaign." (1872: 881)

Odd connections appear in history – Erskine was Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's brother-in-law. Wortley Montagu, 1689-1762, is sometimes argued to be 'Sophia', whose work is assessed in the Coda.

Charles Edward Stuart.⁶¹ The events of the '45 are well covered (see, for example, Home 1802, Mitchison 1970, Devine 1999) but in brief, Charles landed in the Hebrides in July 1745, raised an army and advanced into England. This army reached Derby but was forced to turn back and the long march home ended at Culloden on 16/4/1746, where the Jacobite army was defeated and denuded by 'Butcher' Cumberland's forces.⁶² Physical punishment was followed by Acts of Parliament that forbade Highlanders and clan members from carrying weapons and wearing the plaid. The estates of prominent Jacobite families were seized by the government and Henry Dundas would garner great support in Scotland by restoring those estates in 1784.⁶³ The recipients would compensate the government for any money spent on improvements and that compensation would be used to finance the construction of a canal between the Forth and the Clyde – old and new Scotland meeting, with those who would have taken Scotland out of a commercial union paying for its development.

⁶¹ Charles Edward Stuart, 1720-1788. Born in exile in Rome, he was known as 'the Young Pretender'.

⁶² Charles is often romantically remembered as 'Bonnie Prince Charlie': "this tall handsome youth with the light of triumph in his eyes ... like a prince out of a fairy tale." (Mackie 1955: 356) After the '45 failed Charles' life went into steady decline. Mackie gives him this poignant epitaph: "The Prince watched the rout of his army with tears in his eyes ... It would have been well for him had he fallen 'when the clans faced the bayonets and died on the guns'. Though he lived on for another forty-two years, 'the name died before the man', the gallant and chivalrous adventurer was forgotten in the querulous, drink-sodden voluptuary." (Ibid.: 362/363)

⁶³ Henry Dundas, first Viscount Melville, 1742-1811. Too little remembered today, he was immensely famous and influential in his time. He held several key government posts and was known as 'Harry the Ninth' and 'the uncrowned king of Scotland'. Posts included: Solicitor General of Scotland, 1766 (at the age of 24); M.P. for Midlothian 1774-1790; M.P. for Edinburgh 1790-1802; Lord Advocate 1775-1783; Privy Councillor 1782-3; Keeper of the Scottish Signet 1782; Treasurer of the Navy 1784-1800; Home Secretary 1791-1794; President of the Board of Control 1793-1801; Secretary of War 1794-1801; Keeper of the Privy Seal of Scotland 1800; First Lord of the Admiralty 1804-5. He was ennobled in 1802. He was also the last British politician to be impeached (for malversation of Naval funds).

It can be argued that without Dundas' intervention, communism would not have taken the shape it did. In the wake of the French Revolution, an Aliens Act was passed to impose controls on the flood of refugees from the Continent. A case was brought to Dundas' attention by friends who wrote to him on behalf of an old acquaintance, Jenny von Westphalen, the widow of General von Westphalen, who was in difficulties. She was the daughter of the Reverend George Wishart, the minister of Edinburgh's Tron Church and an old friend of Dundas. Dundas was known for his fondness for the ladies and helped her and her family politically and financially. "Never able to resist an appeal from the fair sex, Dundas enabled her and her family to survive. Her grandchild and namesake, Jenny von Westphalen, was to become Mrs Karl Marx." (Fry 1992a: 189)

The half century after the '45 saw massive social change: the beginning of the Scottish diaspora, which saw the migration of over 2 million Scots; an explosion of economic activity; increased internal migration to the cities; large urban growth, which led to new social problems.⁶⁴ Scotland was undergoing rapid change and the capital, Edinburgh, saw the gradual growth of the New Town: "a suite of handsome buildings ... the material expression of ideas of civilian life created out of the ruins of Jacobite rebellion and Presbyterian theocracy."⁶⁵ This background of change and tradition, conflict and assimilation was the background for the Scottish Enlightenment.

It is often argued that Scotland 'surrendered' to England in 1707, with some Scottish historians writing of the sacrifice of national sovereignty and a loss of independence that made Scotland feel inferior: "Edinburgh was no longer the capital of a Sovereign state; it remained only the seat of administration of what appeared to have become a province."⁶⁶ However, the two nations had shared a ruler since 1603 and in 1586 James VI/I had signed a treaty with England accepting a regular subsidy from Elizabeth I. This was not popular but was necessary as Scotland was poor and beleaguered and the treaty bought money and peace: "The price was the acceptance of Scotland's status as a satellite state..."⁶⁷ There were frequent complaints that the

⁶⁴ For example, there were food riots over prices in 1756/7, 1763, 1767, 1771/4, 1783, 1794/6 and 1800/1. While some were getting richer, some were getting poorer and increasingly desperate.

⁶⁵ Buchan 2003: 173/4. This time also saw the building of Edinburgh's George Square, "still a fine space for all the ravages of time and Edinburgh University..." (Ibid.: 189) It also saw the erection of Sir Laurence Dundas' house in St Andrews Square, now the headquarters of the Bank of Scotland. Dundas had made his money partly by supplying Cumberland's soldiers.

The construction of the New Town began with the draining of the Nor' Loch (the current site of Princes Street Gardens) in 1759. In 1763 tenders were invited for a bridge to span the gorge; North Bridge was completed in 1772. In April 1767 Edinburgh's magistrates and Town Council announced that James Craig, an unknown young architect, had won the competition to design the New Town. His plan was one of wide streets, straight roads, grand and elegant buildings. "Craig's plan was a perfect visual embodiment of the ideas of progress, prosperity, order and elegance that were represented by the Scottish Enlightenment; its object was to make the chief city of North Britain worthy of the reputation it was increasingly winning as a centre of excellence." (Daiches 1978: 129) Old Edinburgh – with its narrow winding streets, high cramped tenements and inadequate access to water – had a reputation as one of the filthiest cities in Europe. Waste disposal in particular was a problem and the Nor' Loch was used as a general dumping ground. "What was squalid in a village, and nasty in a town of thirty or forty thousand, became a general menace to health and an obstacle to civilised living in a city of one or two hundred thousand." (Mitchison 1970: 359) The New Town, it was hoped, would be a monument to prosperity and progress and help make Edinburgh a city fit for the greatest thinkers.

⁶⁶ Matheson 1933: 3.

⁶⁷ Goodare, 'Scottish Politics in the Reign of James VI', pp.32-55 in Goodare and Lynch (eds.) 2000: 38. Lynch writes that while James accepted £4000 in 1586, it seems he received only £3000 and

1707 Union had curtailed opportunities for Scots to take part in government and public life and writers such as Adam Ferguson would bemoan the increasing bureaucratisation of public life. But when James VI/I went south in 1603 he argued he could rule Scotland by the pen, not unjustifiably as he had created a bureaucracy to run Scotland, a fully functioning government system that did not need the king's daily attention. The Scottish Parliament, often mythologised as a defender of popular rights, had no contemporary reputation as a forum of public debate. On the contrary, "it had a long and shameless history of supine subservience to royal authority."⁶⁸ That Scotland and England were already in tacit union can be seen by the pro-Union forces arguing that either Scotland could be run by England and subject to the English government *without* trading access or be subject to a Parliament in London, with Scots in it, *with* trading access. Simplistic analysis has it that Scots gave up independence for money: "They [the Scots] surrendered their autonomous political institutions for the right to trade."⁶⁹ But any autonomous political institutions were ineffective against English pressure. Scotland lost a Parliament but retained the institutions that differentiated her social culture and civil society – the Kirk, the legal system and the educational system.

T. C. Smout argues that although Scottish political economists were not writing mainly about Scotland when proposing general models, "it would be wilful not to recognize that part of their intellectual equipment was the experience of the contemporary Scottish economy and recent economic history, and that if we want to understand them it may help to understand this experience also."⁷⁰ I would argue this is also true of the political situation. If we are to properly understand debates around citizenship it is useful to know the political situation they were being conducted in. After 1707, Scotland had little formal recognition in the British government. The role of Secretary of State for Scotland was abolished in 1725, revived in 1742 but abolished again in 1746, with formal functions added to the role of Home Secretary.

between then and 1603 received roughly £58,000. "The amount was trifling ... It did not begin to meet the massively rising costs of royal government." (1994: 226)

⁶⁸ Herman 2003: 43.

⁶⁹ Teichgraeber 1979: 52.

⁷⁰ 'Where had the Scottish economy got to by the third quarter of the eighteenth century?', pp.45-72 in Hont and Ignatieff (eds.) 1983: 45.

Electorally, the franchise was extremely limited, with only 2,662 voters for all Scottish constituencies in 1788. The Scottish population was estimated at 1,250,000 in 1755; at 1,600,000 in 1801; at 2,600,000 in 1841. By 1830, the voter roll had risen to 3,227. Scotland was electorally divided into counties and burghs with 30 county M.P.s and 15 burgh M.P.s. Those qualified to vote in the counties were landowners whose land was valued at not less than £400 a year.⁷¹ Of the 2,662 voters, an estimated 1,370 were 'faggot votes' – votes set up by landowners and the elite distributing land away to ensure influence. Burgh votes were even less democratic. Burghs were grouped into 14 districts (9 districts of 5 burghs and 5 districts of 4) with Edinburgh getting its own M.P. Edinburgh's M.P. was elected by the 33 members of the Town Council, 13 of whom could form a quorum. For the other burghs, each Town Council in the group nominated one delegate and those delegates nominated the M.P. Town Councils were not themselves elected but nominated by the previous Town Council.

It was not just in this aspect that Scotland was less than progressive. The plight of Scottish workers is too little recognised. Until the end of the eighteenth century many Scottish miners were serfs, bound for life to the mines their fathers and grandfathers had worked. It was not until 1799 that serfdom was abolished in Scottish mines but this did not drastically improve working conditions. Women and girls as young as 6 were employed to do the work that would later be taken over by pit ponies. Shifts were long with 15-hour shifts common and 24-hour shifts not unknown. There was little individuals affected could do – Trade Unions, one possible source of help, were declared illegal in 1799. The ban was lifted in 1824 but, though tolerated, Unions had little power.

⁷¹ In 1788, the county voting rolls varied from 12 in Bute to 18 in Cromarty to 214 in Ayr. There were only 10 counties where the voter roll was over 100.

2. The earlier intellectual tradition

Eighteenth century Scotland was adjudged “the historical age and this the Historical Nation.”⁷² While this was certainly a period in which the Scottish Enlightenment challenged moral, social, political, philosophical and scientific beliefs in a spirit of independent inquiry, there was a very important earlier intellectual tradition that resonates through eighteenth century social and political writing. As Alexander Broadie writes:

philosophers of the Scottish Enlightenment did not philosophize in a vacuum; by the beginning of the eighteenth century the country ... had acquired a rich philosophical tradition, and it is past belief that in the absence of that tradition the Scottish Enlightenment could have been written.⁷³

Scotland at the turn of the eighteenth century has been characterised in many ways. Arthur Herman describes a nation governed by a harshly repressive Kirk, a nation of cruel Calvinistic faith, with trials for blasphemy and witchcraft. James Buchan describes Edinburgh before 1745 as “a city that had for centuries been a byword for poverty, religious bigotry, violence and squalor...”⁷⁴ Simplistic analysis has it that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Scotland was intellectually poor. Richard Teichgraber, for example, argues that “[t]he positive intellectual reputation of Scotland as a nation was established virtually overnight in the middle decades of the eighteenth century.”⁷⁵ This is wrong. There was already a tradition of independent inquiry amongst Scots, both at home and abroad. Broadie writes of the Scottish universities – St Andrews (founded 1411/1412), Glasgow (founded 1451), Aberdeen (founded 1495), Edinburgh (founded 1583) – “that, even during the second half of the seventeenth century ... provided their students with an education, including a scientific education, at a standard equal to that found at the great universities on the continent.”⁷⁶

⁷² David Hume, writing to William Strahan in August 1770, quoted on the front page of Broadie 2001.

⁷³ 1990: 3.

⁷⁴ 2003: 1.

⁷⁵ 1979: 24.

⁷⁶ ‘Introduction’, pp.3-31 in Broadie (ed.) 1997: 10/11.

In the sixteenth-century John Mair had a European-wide reputation as a teacher, theologian, philosopher, historian and logician.⁷⁷ His lectures at the University of Paris were attended by George Buchanan, John Calvin, Ignatius Loyala and Francois Rabelais. He was also John Knox's theology tutor at St Andrews. Knox's work discussed, amongst other issues, notions of appropriate government and civic responsibility. Buchanan and Knox argued that political power, ordained by God, was not vested in monarchs but in the people and therefore the people had both the right and the duty to remove a monarch who did not serve their interests.⁷⁸ Colin Kidd argues that what Buchanan meant by 'the people' was an assembly of nobles, what he called "the virtuous men of the community."⁷⁹ We will see this again in Adam Ferguson's work when he argues for an exclusive and limited citizenship. William Ferguson argues that Buchanan and Knox, with their Scottish histories, tried to create a sense, and shared understanding, of the Scottish nation. This would also be attempted by, amongst others, James Macpherson and Walter Scott. This intellectual curiosity continued into the seventeenth-century and early eighteenth century. The work of Sir Robert Sibbald, Paul Wood argues, reveals "the characteristic virtuoso conjunction of interest in history, antiquities and natural history, reflecting Sibbald's ambition to reconstruct Scotland's past and to discover its potential for future cultural and economic improvement."⁸⁰ Kidd argues that Sibbald's circle's antiquarianism moved Scottish intellectual culture in directions that were to ease the birth of Scottish sociology. Their interests in the history of the arts, sciences and trades "legitimated aspects of economic and social history within the agenda of antiquarianism."⁸¹

⁷⁷ John Mair, c.1467-1550, Scottish theologian and historian.

⁷⁸ George Buchanan, c.1506-1582, scholar, humanist and founding father of Scottish Presbyterianism. In 1567 he became Moderator of the Kirk's General Assembly, the only layman to ever do so. Works include *De Maria Scotorum Regina (Ane Detectioun of the Duings of Mary Quene)*, 1571; *De Juri Regni apud Scotos*, 1579; *Rerum Scoticarum Historia*, a twenty-volume history of Scotland, 1582.

⁷⁹ 1993: 20.

⁸⁰ "Jolly Jack Phosphorus' in the Venice of the North; or Who Was John Anderson?", pp.111-132 in Hook and Sher (eds.) 1997: 116.

⁸¹ Kidd 1993: 112. Walter Scott's 1816 *The Antiquary* would satirise antiquaries, namechecking Sibbald, Stukeley, Gordon and Roy. Sir Arthur Wardour and Jonathan Oldbuck quarrel over things "rendered classical by Buchanan"; over the origins of the Scots/Picts and their language. "'Gordon comes into my opinion ... Sir Robert Sibbald holds mine.'" (1995: 48)

Sibbald, 1641-1722, was many things. He established Edinburgh's botanical garden; he was the first Professor of Medicine at the University of Edinburgh; he founded the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh in 1881; he was Cartographer-Royal for Scotland. There is much that could be written

Another thinker who engaged with the problems of a changing society was Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun. Although there are valid arguments for considering Fletcher as an early Enlightenment thinker, I will not be addressing his work in any depth for two reasons. Firstly, there is much of value already written on Fletcher, while Carmichael and Hutcheson's contributions are too little considered. Secondly, Fletcher's significant work was completed before 1707 and did not engage with the issue of Scotland after the Union, which Carmichael and Hutcheson's work does. However, his work does merit a short discussion here to demonstrate the longevity of Scottish Enlightenment concerns. Walter Scott called him "one of the most accomplished men, and best patriots, whom Scotland has produced in any age..."⁸² J. G. A. Pocock calls him "Scotland's successor to Bacon and Harrington..."⁸³ Although a controversial figure, he was well-read and said to have one of the largest libraries in Europe. P. H. Scott writes of this:

many years before the period usually ascribed to the Enlightenment, Fletcher's library catalogue suggests many of its fundamental characteristics, the historical approach, the receptiveness to ideas from abroad, the unbounded curiosity and the refusal to divide inquiry into water-tight compartments.⁸⁴

Although Fletcher wrote on a variety of topics the two most relevant to this Thesis are his opposition to the 1707 Union and his militia writings.⁸⁵ He opposed the

about Sibbald and for a detailed discussion of Sibbald's role in early Enlightenment Scotland see R. L. Emerson's 'Sir Robert Sibbald, Kt, the Royal Society of Scotland and the Origins of the Scottish Enlightenment', pp.41-72 in *Annals of Science*, 45, 1998.

⁸² 1872: 673.

⁸³ 1999b: 264. Francis Bacon, 1561-1626, philosopher and statesman; James Harrington, 1611-1677, political philosopher.

⁸⁴ 1994: 21.

⁸⁵ His first known publication was *A Discourse concerning Militias and Standing Armies; with relation to the Past and Present Governments of Europe and of England in particular*, printed in London in 1697. This was reissued in Edinburgh in 1698 under new title *A Discourse of Government with relation to Militias*. It was written in the context of the first English Standing Army Controversy, 1697/8. The Peace of Ryswick in Sept 1697 had ended William III/II's war with France, which now acknowledged him as king of Scotland and England and consequently withdrew aid from James VII/II. Following this the Country Party tried to force the Standing Army to disband and a pamphlet war was launched. Other works include *A Discourse concerning the Affairs of Spain*, 1689; *Two Discourses concerning the Affairs of Scotland*, 1689; *A Speech upon the State of the Nation*, 1701; *Speeches by a member of the Parliament which began at Edinburgh the 6th of May, 1703*, 1703; *An Account of a Conversation concerning the Right Regulation of Governments for the common Good of Mankind*, 1704; *Proposals for the Reformation of Schools and Universities, in Order to the Better*

Union as he believed Scottish independence was not something to swap for trading privileges. Though he valued the benefits commerce could bring he saw a danger in creating a society based solely on monetary and commercial interests. This, he argued, would be 'unmanly' and devalue the human spirit. We will see similar arguments in Adam Ferguson's work. John Robertson's fascinating writing on Fletcher characterises his work as neo-Machiavellian, especially his concern with arms and citizenship in modern society, a concern reflected in his extensive coverage of the subject. For Fletcher, Standing Armies arose when citizens were too lazy or too concerned with luxury and ease to defend themselves, preferring to pay someone else to do so. This was dangerous as it gave the monarch too much power and citizens too little. Standing Armies and other mercenary forces were a threat to liberty and property, "for he that is armed, is always the master of the purse of he that is unarmed."⁸⁶ A militia should be the chief part of a free people's constitution as it preserved and protected public liberty; to deny men this denied them not only security but also a sense of pride:

I cannot see, why arms should be denied to any man who is not a slave, since they are the only true badges of liberty, and ought never ... to be put in the hands of mercenaries or slaves: neither can I understand why any man that has arms, should not be taught the use of them.⁸⁷

Fletcher, like Ferguson later, wanted the militia to be a school of both military discipline and virtue and, he argued, his scheme would teach men to be content with fewer possessions; to be brave; to be honourable; to be good men.⁸⁸ His militia

Education of Youth, Humbly Offer'd to the Serious Consideration of the High Court of Parliament, 1704, an anonymous pamphlet now attributed to Fletcher.

⁸⁶ Fletcher, 'A Discourse of Government with Relation to Militias', [Fletcher A] pp.1-31 in Robertson (ed.) 1997: 4.

⁸⁷ Ibid.: 23.

⁸⁸ His plan was for four camps, three in England and one in Scotland. All young men would enter at 22 and stay for two years if self-supporting, one if being kept by the public. They would be taught a variety of fighting skills; those who could afford to would have a horse and be taught to ride it properly. The camp should move regularly from heath to heath, not only for sanitary reasons but also to accustom the youths to moving, carrying and making camp. They would be taught to forage and live on a simple diet. When not practicing fighting or planning attacks they were obliged to read military histories. No churchmen should be allowed in camp. There would be punishment for swearing, lewd actions and gambling, there should be no women in camp and homosexuality or self-abuse would be punishable by death. After this service was completed, men should meet regularly to exercise and there would be a yearly weeklong refresher course.

camps would be “as great a school of virtue as of military discipline...”⁸⁹ Fletcher, again like Ferguson, is often portrayed as opposing commercial development and trade progress but this is wrong. A particular bugbear of his was that the taxes levied to pay for a Standing Army discouraged trade: “And we ought not to forget that we are beginning, to the real advantage of the nation, to make some small progress in trade; but if it not be encouraged, and much more if it be nipt in the bud, there is the end of all our hopes.”⁹⁰ He complained that Scotland was taxed, in peacetime, to maintain forces that defended the two richest nations on earth, England and Holland, which was especially unfair as those nations sought to exclude Scotland from commercial opportunities. He argued that the £84,000 proposed for Scotland to maintain a Standing Army could be far better employed on Scottish agriculture, manufacturing and trade to enrich the nation:

whereas great numbers of soldiers produce nothing but beggary in any place. People employed in manufactures, husbandry and trade, make consumption as well as soldiers, and their labour and industry is an oversurplus of wealth to the nation, whilst soldiers consume twice as much as they pay for, and live idle.⁹¹

Similar concerns would be raised in Francis Hutcheson’s work. Buchanan, Knox, Sibbald and Fletcher, amongst others, had all displayed intellectual curiosity and sought to contribute to contemporary debates on the nature and development of society. What this helps to demonstrate is that the Scottish Enlightenment was not a sudden explosion of intellectual activity but part of a continuing Scottish consideration of the world and the forces that moulded society. While the Scottish Enlightenment was influenced by outside elements, three crucial factors in its development were: Scotland’s history; existing Scottish debates on government and society; the interplay between the two. While general trends in Scottish history

⁸⁹ Fletcher A: 29. These were the benefits of a militia but to emphasise this point he listed the consequences of a Standing Army. There would be violation of property, a decline in trade, heavy taxes, misery for the ‘poorer sort’, the financial ruin of the nobility and deceit and treachery in all ranks of men. The Scottish nobility would be ignorant cowards. Women would also suffer – they would be debauched by the soldiers’ lust and lose their looks, made “ugly and nasty through poverty, and the want of things necessary to preserve their natural beauty.” (Ibid.: 31)

⁹⁰ Fletcher, ‘Two Discourses Concerning the Affairs of Scotland’, pp.33-81 in Robertson (ed.) 1997: 49.

⁹¹ Ibid.: 46.

impacted on the Scottish Enlightenment's political thinking, two particularly relevant periods and events are the reign of James VI/I and the treatment of women, as exemplified by the Scottish witch-hunt. Both help illuminate and illustrate continuing concerns with effeminacy and political responsibility.

1. *James VI/I*

A discussion of James VI/I can tell us much about contemporary conceptions of political responsibility. In particular, James' behaviour and perceived effeminacy were seen by critics to be at odds with the 'correct' political persona of a king. According to his critics, kings were supposed to be manly warriors but James instead sought peace and compromise, behaviour adjudged effeminate. They thought his responsibility lay in defending the martial honour of the state (and allowing his subjects to do the same); he thought his responsibility lay in keeping his country safe and out of wars. A discussion of James can inform our understanding of the eighteenth-century debate, demonstrating the longevity of concerns over political responsibility. Political responsibility, and thus political persona, can also be applied to the conduct of nations. Writ large, it is the behaviour expected from nations in accordance with their traits and circumstances. English critics argued that James, a foreign king, was denying England the opportunity to fulfil her political responsibility; this would be reversed in eighteenth century debates over a Scottish militia.

James, who became king of Scotland at just a year old, had a very irregular and bleak childhood. He was tutored by George Buchanan - and "whose childhood would not have been bleak with George Buchanan as a tutor?"⁹² However, James developed well intellectually and he is now considered one of Britain's most intellectual monarchs, a talented scholar who published works on several topics, including the nature of kingship, witchcraft and the dangers of smoking.⁹³ He did not develop as

⁹² Wormald, 'Tis true I am a Cradle King': the View from the Throne', pp.241-256 in Goodare and Lynch (eds.) 2000: 244. Buchanan is often remembered as a harsh man and was certainly free with physical punishment.

⁹³ It was traditional to sneer at James' pedantry and work. Adam Ferguson, for example, compared it with Buchanan's when discussing the theatre. He wrote that sensible, learned men knew a good tragedy "has been in all ages esteemed amongst the chief products of human ability; that the authors of such works become more renowned with posterity than the princes and monarchs of the earth. The verses of *Buchanan* and *Milton* are more respected than those of *Henry* and *James*..." (1757: 27. Italics in original) However, his reputation has been rehabilitated in the last fifty years. Mackie writes of his "clear and vigorous mind..." (1955: 263) Hill writes of James as a "well-trained scholastic

well physically and it is recorded that he did not walk until the age of five, which tallies with reports that he suffered a bad gait all his life. Modern historians have speculated that he suffered either from rickets, porphyria or cerebral palsy.⁹⁴

In his 1598 *Basilikon Doron* James laid out his theories on kingship. It was a book of practical advice for his son on how to rule multiple kingdoms and reflects both how James saw himself and wished others to see him. It was first printed in secret for private circulation, with the first public edition released in 1603 as James prepared to take the English throne. It was tremendously successful, with estimates of as many as 16,000 copies sold. In it, he wrote that a king had three duties: his duty as a Christian to God; his duty in his office as king; his duty to set an example to his people. He discussed the difference between a good king and a tyrant: "The one acknowledgeth himselfe ordained for his people, having received from God a burthen of government, whereof he must be countable; the other thinketh his people ordained for him..."⁹⁵ He warned his son to respect and not abuse Parliament – advice his grandson Charles I might have been wise to heed. The Church should be kept out of policy-making and the king should control its meetings. A king should rule in person and go regularly among his people. He wrote of the importance of learning: "it is necessarie yee delight in reading, and seeking the knowledge of all lawfull things..."⁹⁶ He advised his son to read history, especially Scottish history, but not Buchanan or Knox's: "such infamous invectives ... if any of these infamous libels remained until your dayes, use the Law upon the keepers thereof..."⁹⁷ James underlined a king's duty to his people (and his opposition to Buchanan) in his 1598/1599 *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies: Or the Reciproock and mutuall duetie*

individual..." (1966: 99) Mitchison writes that his love of learning "was natural and went deep, his command over language vigorous and effective." (1970: 141) Young argues that James was "an impressively learned man, a true scholar..." (2000: 9)

⁹⁴ In a March 2004 television drama, 'Gunpowder, treason and plot', about Mary, Queen of Scots and James, Robert Carlyle played James. He described how he portrayed him as a 'cripple', with a fault all down his left side, to try to express James' inner flaws. That physical disability should still be associated with moral imperfection is deeply disturbing. If we 'moderns' have this view it is easy to see how James' contemporary image would have been affected by his appearance.

⁹⁵ 'Basilikon Doron. Or his Majesties Instructions To His Dearest Sonne, Henry The Prince', [James VI/I A] pp.199-258 in Rhodes, Richards and Marshall (eds.) 2003: 218.

⁹⁶ Ibid.: 241.

⁹⁷ Ibid.: 243. When James came into power he banned Buchanan's 1582 *Rerum Scotticarum historia* and recalled all copies of his 1579 *De Jure regni apud Scotos*, with imprisonment and a £200 fine for anyone found with a copy.

betwixt a free King, and his naturall Subjects. This work aimed to justify the Divine Right of kings and emphasised the king's role as father of his people. "And as the Father of his fatherly duty is bound to care for the nourishing, education and vertuous government of his children..."⁹⁸

James wrote that a king should choose his companions carefully and be aware of his speech, clothes and deportment because a king is always watched. It was important to set a good example: "Let your owne life be a law-booke and a mirrour to your people ... therein they may see, by your image, what life they should leade."⁹⁹ An important part of this was marrying well, to "a godly and vertuous wife", who should be your closest companion.¹⁰⁰ Marriage could be the greatest blessing in a man's life and he should prepare for it by being chaste before marriage. Sexual relations before marriage were wrong as your body only belongs to your wife. James is surprisingly modern here, asking how a man could expect to marry a virgin if he was not prepared to live up to the same standards. "For how can ye justly crave to bee joined with a pure virgine, if your bodie be polluted?"¹⁰¹ A king should also dress and act appropriately: "especially eschew to be effeminate in your cloathes, in perfuming, preening, or such like..."; when writing and speaking he should avoid "effeminate tearmes..."¹⁰² James did not necessarily follow his own advice. After 1603 he ruled Scotland 'by the pen' and visited only once; he had a reputation for swearing and drinking heavily; most importantly, his perceived effeminacy would become an important political issue.¹⁰³

⁹⁸ James VI/I, 'The Trew Law of Free Monarchies: Or the Reciproock and mutuall duetie betwixt a free King, and his naturall Subjects', pp.259-279 in Rhodes, Richards and Marshall (eds.) 2003: 262.

⁹⁹ James VI/I A: 231.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.: 235.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.: 236.

¹⁰² Ibid.: 250; 251.

¹⁰³ While James may not have been moderate in his consumption of alcohol, he had a surprisingly modern attitude to smoking. In his 1604 *A Counterblaste to Tobacco* he objected to "this vile custome of Tobacco taking" because it looked unpleasant, smelt unpleasant and was harmful to the brain and the lungs. ('A Counterblaste to Tobacco', pp.281-292 in Rhodes, Richards and Marshall (eds.) 2003: 282. Italics in original) He warned that it was habit-forming and despaired of the money wasted on it. A final objection was to people smoking whilst others ate.

As a man and a king, James' behaviour was carefully scrutinised. His personal qualities, preferences and peculiarities had repercussions on domestic and foreign policy. This was particularly true of his sexuality and its expression, which have both long been a topic of historical debate. He married Anne of Denmark but marriage for monarchs, especially Renaissance monarchs, was primarily about political and dynastic matters not romantic love. The choice of a Danish princess was suitable because she came from a good Protestant country; Scotland also had important trade links with Denmark and the Baltic. However, he was attracted to men. James' sexuality has been an awkward issue for many commentators and the topic has been ignored, viewed as a moral failing or side-stepped. For example, G. E. Aylmer writes that although James had an "obvious partiality for handsome and pleasant-mannered young men ... there is no actual proof that while he was king of England James I was actually a homosexual..."¹⁰⁴

Jenny Wormald has recently attempted to rehabilitate James' image but does not really address the issue of his sexuality as part of the bias against him. As Michael B. Young writes: "One of her strongest arguments is that there was a great deal of unfair prejudice against James in England simply because he was a Scot. He was a victim of xenophobia. It does not occur to her to ask whether he was also the victim of homophobia."¹⁰⁵ Young considers the evidence for James having sex with men and concludes that, apart from his and Anne's children, there is at least as much evidence to indicate that James had sex with his 'favourites' as he did with his wife.¹⁰⁶ He was physically affectionate to men in public, not his wife. Given that he had children modern readers might wonder if he was bisexual but to apply such a term, indeed to apply the term homosexual, is anachronistic. We cannot apply such modern concepts to a pre-modern situation – the term 'homosexual' not being coined until the late nineteenth-century. Young concludes: "His lifelong preference, which he expressed in his choice of sexual partners outside marriage, was for sex with

¹⁰⁴ 1963: 31.

¹⁰⁵ 2000: 2.

¹⁰⁶ There is no good term to describe James' partners – lovers, boyfriends or 'significant others' are all too modern. I will use 'favourites' as this implies a certain amount of power and influence.

males.”¹⁰⁷ His most important relationships were with Esme Stuart and George Villiers.¹⁰⁸ It could be argued that this is just speculation and gossip but James’ sexuality and its expression would become a very real political issue.

James’ sexuality disturbed people but, as I will show, they were also concerned with a related issue, his rule through his favourites. He had written that a king should rule in person but his critics argued he allowed his favourites too much power: as Sir Edward Peyton wrote, “his minions and favourites rule the kingdom...”¹⁰⁹ There was an issue of rank: Villiers was from relatively middling orders but rose rapidly,

¹⁰⁷ 2000: 48. Some have pointed out that James condemns sodomy in his writings. Young responds that James also condemned swearing and drinking yet did both heavily. This hypocrisy could have extended to sodomy or James could have felt that, as an absolute monarch, rules did not apply to him. Bergeron adds to the debate by utilising Eve Sedgwick’s work. In her ‘Homophobia, Misogyny, and Capital: The Example of *Our Mutual Friend*’ (pp.126-151 in *Raritan* 2, 1983) she calls attention to a range of same-sex relationships which she defines as ‘homosocial’. Bergeron argues that this is a useful term to characterise James’ lifelong interest in men, with not all of those relationships having a sexual dimension. Sedgwick hypothesises that in any male dominated society there is a special relationship between male homosocial (including homosexual) bonds and institutions that maintain and impose patriarchal power over women. “This obviously does not mean that patriarchal societies necessarily give rise to male homosexuality; rather, the political and social institutions in such a society enable, encourage, and possibly require strong homosocial bonds.” (Bergeron 1991: 30)

¹⁰⁸ Stuart, James’ cousin, was invited to Scotland in 1579 by James, who soon fell in love with him. The situation would be frowned on even today - Stuart was 37 and married with four children; James was just 13. However, they formed a considerable bond and “the King’s affection ... unguardedly and physically displayed, was public knowledge.” (Stewart 2003: 53) When James began to rely on Stuart’s political advice, Stuart’s Catholicism and obvious ambition alarmed many Scottish nobles. Death threats were made and James was forced to send Stuart away. He died suddenly in Paris in 1583, with a last wish before death that his embalmed heart be sent to James.

Villiers and James met in 1614. Villiers, who was with James to the last, outlived him by only a few years, being assassinated by a discharged officer and Puritan, John Felton, on 23/10/1628. He was buried in a tomb to James’ right in the Henry VII Chapel in Westminster Abbey. A remarkable account of their relationship survives in the form of letters between them while Villiers was in Spain in 1623 with the future Charles I. James: “Alas, I now repent me sore that ever I suffered you to go away. I care for match nor nothing, so I may once have you in my arms again.” James: “I have no more to say but if ye hasten you not home I apprehend I shall never see you, for my extreme longing will kill me.” Villiers: “getting libertie to make the speedier hast to lay my selfe at your feete, for never none longed more to be in the armes of his mistris.” Villiers: “I will not intreat you not to love him [Charles] the wors, nor him that threatens you that when he once getts hould of your bedpost againe never to quitt it.” Villiers: “My hart and verie sole dances for joy for the change will be no less then to leape from trouble to ese from sadness to merth nay from hell to heven, I can not now thinke of given thanks for frend wife or child my thoughts are onlie bent of having my dere dad and master legs sone in my armes.” Perhaps the most loving existing letter from James to Villiers: “we may make at this Christmas a new marriage ever to be kept hereafter; for, God so love me, as I desire only to live in this world for your sake, and that I had rather live banished in any part of the earth with you than live a sorrowful widow’s life without you. And so God bless you, my sweet child and wife, and grant that ye may ever be a comfort to your dear dad and husband.” (Bergeron 1991: 177/8)

¹⁰⁹ ‘The Divine Catastrophe of the Kingly Family of the Stuarts: or A Short History of the Rise, Reign, and Ruine Thereof’, pp.309-466 in Scott (ed.) 1811 Vol. 2: 352. This was originally published in 1652. Little is known of Peyton – he was knighted in 1610 and served on the Parliamentary side in the British Civil Wars.

becoming from 1616 a Viscount, an Earl and a Marquis before being made Duke of Buckingham in 1623. From 1617 he wielded significant governmental power and was tremendously unpopular with many. Peyton wrote of him as “first in vice and villany”; Sir Antony Welldon wrote that “he did so stinke in the nostrils of God and men, that God made Felton his instrument to take such a monster (as he was indeed) from his longer domineering amongst men...”¹¹⁰ Danielle Clarke’s article, “The sovereign’s vice begets the subjects error’: the Duke of Buckingham, ‘sodomy’ and narratives of Edward II, 1622-1628’, examines sodomy as a metaphor for corruption, particularly in works attacking Villiers.¹¹¹ Early Stuart writers drew parallels between the unsettling consequences of Edward’s ‘friendships’ with minions and those created by Villiers’ relationships with James and Charles I: “Sodomy in these texts works as a metaphor for the way in which the favourite’s position subverts social norms because of its emphasis on parity between favourite and king. Sodomy in Stuart political writing symbolises a collapse of distinctions, in particular between public and private, the king’s physical and symbolic body.”¹¹² The concern is not solely with sexual acts in themselves but what such acts might signify: “What Buckingham does with James and/or Charles is not the issue in political terms; what such a relationship might represent definitely is.”¹¹³ Clarke writes of the use of sodomy as a rhetorical tool:

as an exemplar to demonstrate the necessity of virtue in government, and of the need to maintain proper boundaries between the body natural and the body politic. Sodomy is the category which represents breaching of distinctions because it entails the incursion of desire into fields (friendship, politics, bonds between men) which are explicitly founded upon its repudiation.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Ibid.: 366; ‘The Court of King Charles’, pp.23-60 in Scott (ed.) 1811 Vol. 2: 44. The initial date of publication is unknown; the edition quoted is the second, published in 1651. Again, little is known of Welldon – he was English, held royal office and attended James on his visit to Scotland.

¹¹¹ pp.46-64 in Betteridge (ed.) 2002.

¹¹² Betteridge, ‘Introduction’, pp.1-10 in Betteridge 2002: 4.

¹¹³ Clarke in Betteridge (ed.) 2002: 52.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.: 61.

Similar attitudes will be seen in Carmichael and Hutcheson's work which, amongst other things, argued that 'deviant' sexual behaviour reflected a lack of concern for others' opinions, a lack of sociableness and posed a threat to an ordered society.

In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century Elizabeth I had had to demonstrate she was 'man enough' to lead a nation in wartime. When James acceded to the English throne he ended the war against Spain, pursued a peaceful foreign policy and allowed 'effeminate' favourites to dominate his court. It soon became a familiar comment that Elizabeth was more of a man than James. In his lifetime he was nicknamed 'Queen James'; it was openly joked that 'Rex fuit Elizabeth: nunc est regina Jacobus'. There was criticism of a court perceived as increasingly effeminate:

Effeminization of the court contributed to a growing concern that Englishmen in general were becoming effeminized and the nation was becoming soft. This, in turn, contributed to a cultural backlash – a reassertion of manliness and militarism that culminated in England's resumption of war against Spain. War became an imperative, not simply for the conventional reasons of state and religion, but also as an arena for Englishmen to prove their manhood.¹¹⁵

There was a similar phenomenon in Scotland in the 1750s and 1760s with the militia agitations, when it was argued the English were denying the Scots the opportunity to practise and display *their* manhood. Other eighteenth-century phenomena, such as xenophobia, English national prejudice against the Scots, were also visible in the seventeenth-century debate. Walter Scott would contribute to the demonisation of the Stuarts, James in particular, with his collection of seventeenth-century polemics against James, published in 1811 as *Secret History of the Court of James the First*.¹¹⁶ A brief overview of these polemics demonstrates that both James' sexuality and nationality were key concerns. Francis Osborne's 1658 *Traditional Memoyres on the Raigne of King James the First* writes of 'wicked, effeminate, and ill-consulted

¹¹⁵ Young 2000: 5/6.

¹¹⁶ Although he was king of Scotland first, many historians and commentators routinely refer to him as James I instead of James VI/I. Here we can see Scott conforming to this Anglo-centric prejudice.

princes..."¹¹⁷ He comments on James' favourites: "Now, as no other reason appeared in favour of their choyce but handsomeness, so the love the king shewed was as amorously convayed, as if he had mistaken their sex..."¹¹⁸ He comments on their effeminate dress and remarks that James' love, "or what else posterity will please to call it" was not expressed discreetly:

for the kings kissing them after so lascivious a mode in publick, and upon the theatre, as it were, of the world, prompted many to imagine some things done in the tyring house, that exceed my expressions no less than they do my experience...¹¹⁹

This concern was shared by Welldon, who wrote of James becoming enamoured with Villiers and of "his passion of love to his new favourite, in which the king was more impatient than any woman to enjoy her love."¹²⁰ Peyton wrote of a king "more addicted to love males than females..."¹²¹ He witnessed James and Villiers' relationship and wrote of James' "affections to Sir George Villiers, whom he would tumble and kiss as a mistress."¹²² He clearly disapproved, remarking on "the odd familiarities which James used with his favourites, and which were, to say the least, most disgusting and unseemly."¹²³ James' nationality was also an issue. Osborne wrote of "the beggarly rabble" attending James: "this influx of Scottish adventurers ... disheartening and unpopular to the English people..."¹²⁴ England had to endure a

¹¹⁷ "To the Reader" of *Traditional Memoyres on the Raigne of King James the First*, [Osborne A] pp.125-133 in Scott (ed.) 1811 Vol. 1: 127. Relatively little is known of Osborne, 1593-1659. He was at Court, became Master of the Horse of William, Earl of Pembroke, was employed at Oxford under the Commonwealth and was a friend of Thomas Hobbes. Other works include the 1656/1658 *Advice to a Son*, which was considered misogynistic even by his contemporaries.

¹¹⁸ 'Traditional Memoyres on the Raigne of King James the First', [Osborne B] pp.135-297 in Scott (ed.) 1811 Vol. 1: 274/275.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*: 275.

¹²⁰ Welldon (1651), 'Court and Character of King James. Whereunto is added, The Court of King Charles', pp.313-482 in Scott (ed.) 1811 Vol. 1: 404. The initial date of publication is unknown; the edition quoted is the second, published in 1651. Despite his disapproval, his work is far more balanced than Osborne's. He comments that James was a peaceable, witty and merciful prince: "such a king, I wish this kingdome have never any worse, on the condition, not any better; for he lived in peace, dyed in peace, and left all his kingdomes in a peaceable condition, with his own motto: *Beati pacifici*." (Welldon, 'The Character of King James', pp.1-12 in Scott (ed.) 1811 Vol. 2: 11/12. Italics in original)

¹²¹ Peyton in Scott (ed.) 1811 Vol. 2: 346.

¹²² *Ibid.*: 348.

¹²³ *Ibid.*: 349.

¹²⁴ Osborne B: 143.



foreign king, “an alien by birth”, who gave preferential treatment to his own countrymen.¹²⁵ And this effeminate, alien king was denying Englishmen the opportunity to exercise their courage: he was “casting contempt upon all formerly in military imployment (the wings, nails, and teeth of the nation) ... penning up the English valour...”¹²⁶

Michael B. Young considers three key points: how James’ peaceful foreign policy and effeminate favourites contributed to fears that England was becoming soft; the growing demand for James to be more ‘manly’ and give Englishmen a chance to prove *their* manhood by engaging in the Thirty Years War; the repercussion of James’ sexuality on Charles I’s reign. Sexual activity was not a topic usually discussed in this period but James was a special case “because power, reputation, the nation’s very concept of itself were at stake.”¹²⁷ Power was an issue as his favourites were resented for having too much of it and seen as social upstarts; reputation was an issue as a country with a weak, effeminate king was seen as weak and effeminate. With money and power at stake, accusations of perceived sexual deviancy were an easy way to discredit the king. But, as Young points out, there was also prejudice:

insinuations that James and his favourites engaged in sex were not just convenient and unfounded accusations deployed for purely political purposes. The phenomenon was real, and the prejudice against it was real, a prejudice grounded as much in conventional and Christian morality as it was in politics.¹²⁸

Criticism of James was at its highest in the 1620s when he refused to take part in the Thirty Years War.¹²⁹ He was a peacemaker who avoided war and this raised issues of his manliness. Real men, his critics argued, were willing, ready and able to fight. James was none of these and opponents saw the qualities he valued – his love of peace, his scholarship – as weaknesses. They interpreted his wish for peace as

¹²⁵ Ibid.: 201.

¹²⁶ Ibid.: 183.

¹²⁷ Young 2000: 52.

¹²⁸ Ibid.: 65.

¹²⁹ The Thirty Years War, 1618-1648, began when the Hapsburgs overthrew the newly elected king of Bohemia, Frederick V, Elector Palatine (James’ son-in-law). It ended in 1648 with the Peace of Westphalia.

cowardice, quoting the Spartan proverb that words were feminine, deeds masculine: “The argument over war and peace became an argument over what it meant to be a man. James had one concept of manliness, his critics another, and integral to that difference was the disposition to fight.”¹³⁰ Young goes on to comment that pamphlets about the war stressed the link between manliness and the sword. “There is no doubt some phallic significance in this imagery, but the more practical conclusion was that men had to use their swords to prove their manliness.”¹³¹ This concern – that you could not be a proper man without knowing how to use a weapon – would surface again in the work of militia agitators such as Ferguson.

As noted, a discussion of James’ sexuality might seem like gossip but is relevant. Young argues that throughout his life James upset people because he did not fit the norm. The more his favourites appeared at court, the greater the alarm as the norm of heterosexuality was violated. While society can tolerate and absorb some sexual transgression, such behaviour was risky in kings as “one of their very reasons for existing is to embody and enforce norms.”¹³² Young draws a comparison between James and William III/II, who was also associated with favourites but escaped the ‘stigma’ of effeminacy chiefly due to his ‘macho’ image as a military hero.¹³³ If James had been more militaristic he might have escaped criticism for his sexual

¹³⁰ Young 2000: 86.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*: 89.

¹³² *Ibid.*: 147.

¹³³ Effeminate behaviour, in the form of avoiding women’s company, was a characteristic of Charles Edward Stuart’s that his critics drew attention to. Youngson uses this as an example of one of the problems of writing history, of choosing which facts to comment on and interpret. There was general agreement that Charles was a good-looking man. “But everyone who was in a position to do so had noticed a curious thing about him; as he had already demonstrated during several years in Rome, he had no taste for the company of women.” (1996: 19) Youngson quotes David, Lord Elcho, who was out with Charles: “At night there came a Great many Ladies of Fashion, to Kiss his hand, but his behaviour to them was very Cool: he had not been much used to Women company, and was always embarrassed while he was with them.” (*Ibid.*) Youngson continues: “Perhaps this is quite irrelevant to Charles’s conduct in politics and war, or to his fitness for a throne. But somehow it is not reassuring. For most men and almost all women, disinclination to female company is a defect in a man’s character. It makes him seem peculiar, a less sympathetic person than otherwise he might be. So if the historian draws attention to it he makes the reader sympathise with Charles a little less than he might otherwise do, but if he says nothing about this peculiar trait – and why should he mention it? – the reader’s sympathies remain unaffected.” (*Ibid.*: 19/20) Adam Smith would have agreed, arguing as he did that “an entire insensibility to the fair sex renders a man contemptible in some measure even to the men.” (2000, Part 1, Section 2, Chapter 1: 34) Maggie Craig provides a more practical reason for Charles’ behaviour: “Although he had several affairs later in life, he simply had too much on his mind during the ’45 to indulge in romantic dalliance...” (1997: 26)

behaviour but, arguably, would have been a worse king. His subjects may have wanted a warlike monarch but James gave them peace and relative prosperity. James had taxed his populace less than Elizabeth, for she had had expensive wars to finance, but he was perceived to spend more money on himself and his court. This is a reversal of traditional male and female qualities – men were generally portrayed as thrifty and concerned with security while women were supposed to care more for personal ornament and comfort. Charles I's reign would be different. James' behaviour – his drinking, spending, sexual morality – had tarnished the crown's reputation and Charles sought to distinguish himself. In particular, he would not allow himself to be called effeminate:

Charles was determined to be manlier than his father ... James had been proud to be styled *Rex Pacificus*, the king of peace; Charles would become *Rex Bellicosus*, a man who provoked fights and hated to back down in the face of opposition. The tragic legacy of the peacemaker, therefore, was that he produced a warmaker.¹³⁴

In conclusion, James' story can tell us much about political responsibility, particularly in relation to effeminacy and national prejudice. James was considered effeminate not only because of his relations with men but also because of his political behaviour. What he saw as responsible governance – keeping Scotland and England out of European wars – his critics saw as weakness. Where he valued words his critics valued action. James refused to conform to the stereotype of kingly behaviour and his reputation suffered as a result. As monarch, James was supposed to set an example and if he refused to behave in a suitably 'manly' way, what hope was there for his subjects to exercise their masculinity? As a Divine Right monarch James was, to a great degree, the state and was denying his subjects the right and the opportunity to be men. The same, it was argued by men such as Adam Ferguson, was true of the eighteenth-century state in denying Scotland a militia. Writers such as Osborne complained of a Scottish king denying Englishmen the chance to prove their manhood and defend themselves; writers such as Ferguson would complain of an

¹³⁴ Young 2000: 35. Italics in original.

English government denying Scots the very same opportunities. According to his critics, James was neither practising good citizenship nor allowing his subjects to.

Traditionally, there were strict ideas of who should be a citizen – a small and virtuous elite, devoted to the interests of the state - and how citizenship should be practised – by deeds and by armed defence. James, it was argued, allowed those of a lower rank to partake in political decision-making and was too concerned with his own comfort to pay proper attention to the interests of the state. He relied on diplomacy and negotiation instead of war and force and this, it was argued, denied his subjects an opportunity to display their courage: see, for example, Osborne's argument that James was 'penning up the English valour'. These two concerns – who should be a citizen and how they should fulfil the criteria of citizenship – would be of continuing importance to generations of Scottish thinkers and would be of particular importance to Scottish Enlightenment thinkers. Like James and his critics, they had to negotiate changing ideas of citizenship in a changing state: James and his critics following the 1603 Union of Crowns, Scottish Enlightenment thinkers after the 1707 Union of Parliaments. Like James and his critics, they had to consider how one could best be a citizen and practise political responsibility.

2. – The Scottish Witch-hunt and Women

James VI/I was regarded with suspicion for his refusal to conform to accepted social standards and norms. This was also true of many women in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, particularly those accused of witchcraft. An examination of the Scottish witch-hunt can tell us much about attitudes to women and social rebels. Women are largely ignored in standard commentaries and histories of nations. As Joy Hendry notes, "women are awarded a place in history only if they are the wives of Kings, nobility, poets (very occasionally), mistresses, or mothers of important men."¹³⁵ Commentaries on the witch-hunt are rare examples of women

¹³⁵ 'Snug in the Asylum of Taciturnity: Women's History in Scotland', pp.125-142 in Donnachie and Whatley (eds.) 1992: 131.

being discussed outside of their relationship with men and their inferiority, weakness and subordinate status are stressed. It is only when women step outside the role given to them by men that they become worthy of commentary. Hendry argues that women are only visible in history when misbehaving: "Women only merit the recorder's ink when sex, and preferably witchcraft, is involved..."¹³⁶

The Scottish Witch-hunt

The European witch-hunt, which lasted from roughly 1500 to 1700, was the persecution of those believed to be witches – individuals with special powers to affect the world and who had some compact with the Devil. This was a wide-spread belief with the vast majority of Europeans believing in witchcraft. This was not confined to the ill-educated – philosophers such as Jean Bodin argued for the existence of witches in league with the Devil.¹³⁷ There have been several explanations posited: mental illness caused by bread infected with ergot; the growing professionalisation of medicine, which meant monopolisation by men and the traditional female medicine of 'wise women' regarded with increasing suspicion – the power to heal being also the power to harm; the sudden interest in witchcraft of a few influential churchmen; the publication of works like Jakob Sprengler and Heinrich Kramer's 1486 *Malleus Maleficarum*; the sense of religious disorientation caused by the Reformation, which encouraged searches for enemies and scapegoats. Quentin Skinner offers a very simple solution. If we suppose that people held the belief – "widely accepted as rational and indeed indubitable in sixteenth-century Europe" – that the Bible was the directly inspired word of God, it would have been "the height of irrationality for them to have disbelieved in the existence of witches."¹³⁸ Since the Bible said the witches existed, that witchcraft was an abomination and that witches should not be allowed to live, to reject this was to reject God's word. "To announce one's disbelief in the existence of witches would

¹³⁶ Ibid.: 136.

¹³⁷ Jean Bodin, 1530-1596, political philosopher. Bodin's justification for the witch-hunt rested on the same arguments as his theory of civil government: the witch was a rebel against God and the state and deserved her punishment. Remembered by some for his political and philosophical writing, he has gone down in history as an intolerant bigot for his part in the witch-hunt, with commentators such as LeVack writing of "witchmongers like Jean Bodin..." (1994: 55)

¹³⁸ Skinner 2002a: 36.

thus have been to announce a doubt about the credibility of God's word. What could have been more dangerously irrational than that?"¹³⁹

Whatever the reason, the European witch-hunt was a murderous time in history, with an estimated 40,000 individuals (mainly women) put to death for an imaginary crime. In England persecution was relatively mild but Scotland conformed more to the Continental model, with an estimated 1,600 executions by 1700. Throughout the period of the British witch-hunt – with about 5,000 trials – more than half were in Scotland and as many as three witches were executed in Scotland for every one in England, despite the fact that England had a population four times that of Scotland.¹⁴⁰ The bulk of witch-hunt prosecutions in Scotland were concentrated between 1590-1662 with five peaks of intense activity: 1590/1591, when James VI/I conducted an investigation into treasonable sorcery; 1597, after the publication of James VI/I's *Demonology*; 1629/1630, the peak of the Continental witch panic; 1649, the peak of Covenanting influence on political life; 1661/1662, the Restoration. Christina Larner argues that the Scottish witch-hunt was one of Europe's major hunts, matched only by those in German principalities and Lorraine: "There were periods in 1649 and 1661 when no mature woman in Fife or East Lothian can have felt free from the fear of accusation."¹⁴¹

There were several factors that enabled the Scottish witch-hunt. The Presbyterian form of church government was spreading, especially through the Lowlands and the north-east, putting in place Kirk sessions that functioned as a mechanism for social policing. Lawrence Normand and Gareth Roberts argue that the witch-hunt can only be fully understood in relation to the Scottish Reformation. "Witchcraft trials were a mechanism through which some of the ideological struggles between church and

¹³⁹ Ibid. Skinner uses Bodin's belief in witchcraft to illustrate his methodology in writing the history of ideas. If we are to identify the nature of Bodin's belief in witchcraft it does not necessarily follow that we need to believe they are true or agree with them. But, by learning his language, seeing what concepts he used and how he reasoned with them we can hope to identify, without much difficulty, where he is writing about witches and what he thought about them.

¹⁴⁰ Figures taken from Christina Larner's 1981 *Enemies of God: The Witch-hunt in Scotland*.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.: 197.

crown were articulated and realised, particularly in relation to questions of spiritual and political authority.”¹⁴² Larner characterises the witch-hunt thus:

The Scottish witch-hunt spanned a period that began with the rise of the doctrine of the divine right of kings and ended with decline of the doctrine of the godly state. The interpretation offered here both of the European hunt and of its Scottish version ... rests essentially on themes of political sociology; power; dominance; ideology; and legitimation.¹⁴³

James VI/I played an important role. In 1589 he went to Denmark to collect his new wife Anne, who he had married by proxy. While in Denmark he met Tycho Brahe (who corresponded regularly with Buchanan) and Niels Hemmingsen and, it is argued, absorbed a certain amount of witch theory from them.¹⁴⁴ There was also an explosion in perceived witch activity in Denmark in 1590 during his stay and a series of witchtrials in Copenhagen. On the return journey to Scotland rough seas buffeted James’ ships, sinking one. When he landed he was told a gang of witches, led by the Earls of Bothwell and Huntley, had been casting spells to try to kill him. James believed in witchcraft, like his contemporaries, and this was the immediate impetus for a witch-hunt that saw hundreds of women investigated.

Both the means and the will for a witch-hunt were present: the Presbyterian machinery for social control and a king who believed he was being attacked by a conspiracy of witches. Any attack on James could be presented as an attack on God, given James’ belief in divine right. “The entire process vindicated his virtue, his relationship to God, and his concern for his people. Once established witch-hunting never needed quite so specific a reason again.”¹⁴⁵ The publication of James’ *Demonology* sparked off the 1597 outbreak of witch-hunting. This short work reflected James’ curiosity and disapproval of witches and his less than positive

¹⁴² Normand and Roberts, ‘Part 1 – Context’, pp.29-124 in Normand and Roberts (eds.) 2000: 71.

¹⁴³ 1981: 192.

¹⁴⁴ Tycho (Tygo) Brahe, 1546-1601, astronomer and scientist who also wrote on witchcraft; Niels Henningsen, 1513-1600, Danish demonologist.

¹⁴⁵ Larner 1981: 198. James’ intervention also had practical consequences. One difficulty in studying the witch-hunt is that, generally, records were patchy if kept at all. Thanks to the intervention of the king and Scottish Privy Council, there are remarkably full records of the Scottish outbreak.

attitude to women. Witches were “these detestable slaves of the devil...”¹⁴⁶ Women, as the weaker sex, were more likely to fall under Satan’s spell: “as that sex is frailer than man is, so is it easier to be entrapped in those gross snares of the devil, as was over-well proved to be true by the serpent’s deceiving of Eva at the beginning...”¹⁴⁷

There were three more serious outbreaks of witch-hunting, the most serious occurring in 1661/1662. Several hundred women were imprisoned, tortured, tried and convicted – in the first six months of 1662 commissions were granted for trials of 125 witch suspects. This outbreak is generally explained as a reaction to the Interregnum and Restoration. Cromwell’s troops had released witch suspects and attempted to eradicate the witch-hunt in Scotland. This is often presented as evidence that Scotland was a backward nation, less developed than England. For example, Larner argues that Cromwell’s actions demonstrated the more sceptical stage English public opinion had reached: “English good sense prevailed over Scottish superstition.”¹⁴⁸ She reports that Cromwell and his troops were said to be horrified by the levels of torture used in witch cases.¹⁴⁹ Even Scottish historians have argued that Scotland was ‘behind’ England in its attitude to witches. “The English made it difficult for the national sport of witch burning...”¹⁵⁰

Both the English and Scottish Witchcraft Acts were repealed by the British Parliament in 1735. The last recorded execution for witchcraft in Scotland was in 1722, with executions declining from 1678 when the Scottish Privy Council declared that it alone had the right to torture. I would agree with Mitchison when she argues that both the decline and repeal were evidence of a changed outlook: “The social and political tensions that had needed witches as scapegoats had eased, and the intellectual climate of the day was averse to the concepts used.”¹⁵¹ David Hume, for

¹⁴⁶ James VI/I, ‘Preface’ to *Demonology*, pp.353-356 in Normand and Roberts (eds.) 2000: 353.

¹⁴⁷ James VI/I, ‘Second Book’ of *Demonology*, pp.379-402 in Normand and Roberts (eds.) 2000: 392.

¹⁴⁸ 1981: 75.

¹⁴⁹ Torture was standardly used in witch cases in Scotland, both indirect and direct. Indirect torture included sleep deprivation, starvation and psychological pressure. Direct torture included the ‘boots’ or ‘cashielaws’, which crushed the legs; ‘pinniewinks’ or thumbscrews; branding with hot irons; tearing out nails. Torture was not only used in witch cases but in criminal cases where there were no witnesses and, in the reign of James VII/II, against Covenanters and other political prisoners.

¹⁵⁰ Mitchison 1970: 234.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*: 331/332.

example, argued that witchcraft was created by those who sought to punish it. "Witchcraft and heresy are two crimes, which commonly increase by punishment, and are never so effectively punished as by being totally neglected."¹⁵² Walter Scott concurred, commenting that after the witchcraft laws were abolished witchcraft disappeared: "Since this [the repeal of witchcraft legislation] has been the case, no-one has ever heard of witches or witchcraft, even among the most ignorant of the vulgar; so that the crime must have been entirely imaginary, since it ceased to exist so soon as men ceased to hunt it out for punishment."¹⁵³ However, while men *had* sought it out nearly 2000 individuals had been tortured and tried. From 1560 to 1727 around 1,500 women and 250 men were prosecuted.¹⁵⁴

The social and political tensions – religious conflict, revolution, Restoration, invasion, occupation – had produced a climate hostile to any threat to civil order and this was how witch suspects were perceived. The witch was seen as a rebel not only against God but the state. As Brian P. Levack argues:

As a heretic and apostate the witch was considered guilty of *lese majeste* or treason against God; as a Devil-worshipper she was part of an enormous political conspiracy; as a lower-class peasant she was part of a movement that was striving to turn the world upside down, reversing the divinely established hierarchical order of society and rejecting all of its moral norms. Sometimes the connection between rebellion and witchcraft was made explicit, as when witch-hunters, quoting the Bible, proclaimed 'Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft', or when Scottish royalists, convinced that witches and covenanters were of the same ilk, proclaimed in 1661 that 'Rebellion is the mother of witchcraft'.¹⁵⁵

The witch suspect was also dangerous because she was a woman. Women did not exist in Scottish criminal law in the sixteenth century, sharing the same status as children and felons and being inadmissible as witnesses in courts of law. It was necessary to pass a special act in 1591 to allow their testimony in witchcraft cases. Over 85% of witch suspects were women because women were feared as a source of

¹⁵² Hume and Smollett 1834, Vol. 5: 59.

¹⁵³ 1872: 516. However, the Presbyterian church stated a belief in witchcraft as late as 1773.

¹⁵⁴ This is a conservative estimate. Apps and Gow argue that from 1560 to 1709 2,208 women and 413 men were prosecuted.

¹⁵⁵ 1994: 58/9.

disorder in patriarchal society and were punished for any independence or power they might have. Those accused of witchcraft were often outspoken, combative women; women who lived alone; widows who had declined to remarry and submit themselves (and their money) to a man's control; midwives and healers, who held an important place in the community. Witch-hunting was frequently the persecution of women who would not know their place. As Lerner argues: "Witch-hunting is woman-hunting or at least it is the hunting of women who do not fulfil the male view of how women ought to conduct themselves."¹⁵⁶ Woman-hunting was especially virulent in Scotland, which had had two strong, controversial female rulers in the sixteenth century – Mary of Guise and Mary, Queen of Scots – who had provoked howls of protest from the male ruling elite and the Reformed church. This hatred of women in power was transferred to powerless women unable to defend themselves.

Women in Scottish political thought

Queens, traditionally the only women to wield power, were a topic of concern in Scottish political thought. Perhaps the most notorious discussion of queens in Scottish political history is John Knox's 1558 *The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*. This work, published anonymously, dealt with the issue of female government and whether a woman could rule over a kingdom by Divine right. Knox comes out fighting: "how abominable before God is the Empire or Rule of a wicked woman, yea, of a traiteiresse and bastard..."¹⁵⁷ In dealing with this abomination he considers questions of political responsibility. Should a people be governed by a woman? What is their duty in this circumstance? He asks if we (men, that is) can just watch as our country and "our brethren" suffer under "the monstrous empire" of a woman.¹⁵⁸ Women should not have 'empire' over men, for such a thing is "amongst all enormities that this day do abound upon the face of the whole earth ... the most detestable and damnable..."¹⁵⁹ Women should not rule as it is offensive to God and a subversion of good order, equity and justice:

¹⁵⁶ 1981: 100. Italics in original.

¹⁵⁷ 'Preface – The Kingdome apperteineth to our God' [Knox A], pp.365-371 in Laing (ed.) MDCCCLV Vol. 4: 365.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.: 368.

For who can denie but it is repugneth to nature, that the blind shall be appointed to leade and conduct such as do see? That the weake, the sicke, and impotent persons shall norishe and kepe the hole and strong? And finallie, that the foolishe, madde, and phrenetike shal governe the discrete, and give counsel to such as be sober of mind? And such be al women, compared unto men in bearing of authoritie. For their sight in civile regiment is but blindness; their strength, weaknes; their counsel, foolishness; and judgement, phrensie, if it be rightlie considered.¹⁶⁰

Women, Knox argues, are foolish and irresponsible and any man who would be governed by a woman is unworthy of public office: “their hartes were changed frome the wisdome, understanding, and courage of men, to the foolishe fondness and cowardice of women...”¹⁶¹ When women govern, vanity is preferred to virtue, ambition and pride to temperance and modesty, and avarice to justice. He cites Biblical authority to support his case and also to demonstrate what happens to women who rule and the men who support them. Both will be condemned to Hell for setting themselves against God. Women are commanded to serve, be humble and submit to their proper masters. Women should be gentle, “a tender creature, flexible, soft and pitifull; whiche nature God hath given to her, that she may be apt to norishe children.”¹⁶² When women behave unnaturally, so do men:

I have made the Nobilitie both of England and Scotland inferior to brute beastes, for that they do to women which no male amongst the common sorte of beastes can be proved to do to their female; that is, they reverence them, and quake at their presence; they obey their commandementes, and that against God. Wherefore I judge them not onlie subjectes to women, but sclaves of Satan, and servants of iniquitie.¹⁶³

After the venom, Knox attempted a systematic philosophical argument against women’s rule. Firstly, he argued, women’s rule is against justice, which for Knox is giving every person their right. Women have no right to rule so giving them power is repugnant to justice. Secondly, whilst it was lawful for women to inherit certain possessions – which Knox grudgingly agreed – they could not inherit the right to rule

¹⁶⁰ ‘The First Blast, to Awaken Women Degenerate’ [Knox B], pp.373-422 in Laing (ed.) MDCCLV Vol. 4: 373/374.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.: 375.

¹⁶² Ibid.: 389.

¹⁶³ Ibid.: 396.

over men as God plainly withheld that from them. For a woman to inherit a throne “is to pollute and prophane the Royall seat, the throne of justice, which ought to be the throne of God; and that to mainteine them in the same is nothing els but continuallie to rebel against God.”¹⁶⁴ This correlation between women and rebellion would be made again in Scotland, as was seen in the treatment of witch suspects and Covenanters. Knox’s view of women was not unusual or shocking for his time, although couched in cruder terms than many. It was Knox’s arguments for deposing queens that contemporaries found shocking. He had concluded his diatribe by arguing that it was the duty of a people led by a woman to remove her from the throne and then kill anyone who supports or supported her reign. This was sedition and he was sufficiently cautious to publish the work anonymously.

Knox’s seditious writings illustrate his attitude to public duty and responsibility. His 1554 *A Faithful Admonition to the Professors of God’s Truth in England* expressed similar sentiments to *First Blast* and was seen by many as a general invitation to the English to assassinate their queen. In theoretical terms Knox’s work encouraged men to sacrifice themselves and their interests for the good of their religion and their country. However, his own behaviour did not reflect this. He had fled to Dieppe in 1554 from fear of persecution by Mary of Guise and Mary I of England. Edwin Muir, amongst others, is dismissive of him for this: “He had been chased out of England by a woman, and he had fled while others more faithful had remained behind.”¹⁶⁵ Muir goes on to argue, perhaps unfairly, that Knox’s publication of *A Faithful Admonition* increased the persecution of Protestants in England, that others died for Knox’s beliefs while he remained safe in Dieppe.

Knox moved on to Geneva where in May 1557 he heard from the Reformed Scottish nobles, who asked him to return to Scotland as they were now prepared to risk their lives in God’s cause. Knox hesitated but was told by John Calvin that not to go would be declaring himself rebellious to God. He deliberated and delayed but eventually left Geneva at the end of September, reaching Dieppe at the end of October to find a letter calling the whole thing off. He wrote to the nobles

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.: 410.

¹⁶⁵ 1930: 59.

condemning their cowardice, appealing to them to rise up and arguing it was their duty because of their position in society to deliver their country. Muir is sceptical: "The appeal to hazard life and goods was couched in the noblest strain, but the Scottish nobles may have reflected that Knox stood somewhat apart from the danger, and that to inspire heroism in Scotland and England while he stayed in Dieppe had become something of a habit with him."¹⁶⁶ Rosalind K. Marshall is more sympathetic, arguing that as Knox was happily settled in Geneva with his wife and baby son it was only natural for him to be unsure about giving up a safe domestic life for a difficult and dangerous journey to Scotland. This is behaviour coded as 'feminine' or effeminate by writers such as Adam Ferguson, who argued that concern with comfort and the home was typically feminine behaviour, while interest in the world – 'looking abroad' – and being prepared to act was masculine.

Knox's work (if not his behaviour) demonstrates his concept of political responsibility, specifically in the form of his gendered notion of virtue. Women were foolish, weak, cowardly and stupid; men were wise, strong, brave and intelligent. Men, especially of the higher orders, had a responsibility and a duty to their country. They had to defend their country from internal and external threats and any abrogation of this duty was weakness and effeminacy. Women should have no public or political role and women who dared to transgress social norms by wielding power were not only unnatural but also rebels – rebels against men and God. Just as James' behaviour had had repercussions, so did theirs. A king was responsible for his people and had to set a good example. Women were responsible to their men and, Knox argued, when women behaved unnaturally so did men. In this he gives women responsibility for others' behaviour, with women a corrupting influence on men. In Scottish Enlightenment writing there would be similar concerns with elite political participation and the erosion of civic virtue. There was a difference in their treatment of women, however, with women seen not as a corrupting but as a potentially civilising influence on men.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.: 126.

David Hume's attitude to women was far more sympathetic than Knox's, with frequent discussions of women and their actions in his *History of England* which, Pocock argues, is narratively unique in that "the protagonist and the antagonist are both women rulers – Elizabeth and Mary Stuart, with Mary of Guise and Catherine de Medici as less immediate figures – and Hume has the opportunity to write a history of 'the regiment of women'. This he does not consider monstrous at all."¹⁶⁷ He wrote of women accomplished in war and politics and, Pocock argues, "Hume respected viragos and heroines, and did not think them prodigies against nature..."¹⁶⁸

Hume wrote of warrior women such as Jane of Flanders and Phillipa of Hainault, who were both capable "of exerting every manly virtue."¹⁶⁹ He wrote of Jane Grey who, educated alongside her brother, "seemed to possess greater facility in acquiring every part of manly and polite literature."¹⁷⁰ He praised Elizabeth I for holding the reins of power "with such prudence and fortitude..."¹⁷¹ However, he commends her for virtues traditionally coded as 'masculine': "Her vigor, her constancy, her magnanimity, her penetration, vigilance, address, are allowed to merit the highest praises, and appear not have been surpassed by any person that ever filled a throne..."¹⁷² He continued, arguing that she had a singular talent for government, which indicates that he did not think this a general female skill or characteristic. He discussed her both as a ruler and as a woman and in the latter category she was judged as less than acceptable. Hume does not rate her as a girlfriend, as seen in an argument clearly addressed to the chaps:

¹⁶⁷ 1999b: 233. David Hume, 1711-1776, philosopher and historian. Works include *A Treatise on Human Nature*, 1739/1740; *Essays Moral and Political*, 1741/1742; *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, 1748; *An Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, 1751; *Political Discourses*, 1752; *History of England*, 1754/1762; *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, 1779.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.: 249.

¹⁶⁹ Hume and Smollett 1834, Vol. 2: 323.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. Vol. 4: 282.

¹⁷¹ Ibid. Vol. 5: 6.

¹⁷² Ibid.: 342.

When we contemplate her as a woman, we are apt to be struck with the highest admiration of her great qualities and extensive capacity; but we are also apt to require some more softness of disposition, some greater lenity of temper, some of those amiable weaknesses by which her sex is distinguished; but the true method of estimating her merit, is to lay aside all these considerations, and consider her merely as a rational being placed in authority, and entrusted with the government of mankind. We may find it difficult to reconcile our fancy to her as a wife or mistress; but her qualities as a sovereign, though with some considerable exceptions, are the object of undisputed applause and approbation.¹⁷³

Hume also discussed Mary, Queen of Scots and, while giving the usual tribute to her beauty, commented on her intelligence: “the bloom of her youth and amiable beauty of her person were further recommended by the affability of her address, the politeness of her manners, and the elegance of her genius.”¹⁷⁴ He displayed sympathy to Mary against Knox, arguing his sermons and work were seditious and Knox himself filled with “rage and bigotry.”¹⁷⁵ Hume’s commentary on Knox suggests how Scottish Enlightenment thinkers were in debate with the earlier Scottish intellectual tradition, with those who had been before them. On Knox’s *First Blast*, Hume argued Knox was too proud to recant or even apologise, “and his conduct showed that he thought no more civility than loyalty due to any of the female sex.”¹⁷⁶ Hume was civil to women but his work demonstrates a gendered notion of virtue, as can be seen by his discussion of Mary:

Ambitious and active in her temper, yet inclined to cheerfulness and society; of a lofty spirit, constant, and even vehement in her purpose, yet polite, and gentle and affable in her demeanor; she seemed to partake only so much of the male virtues as to render her estimable, without relinquishing those soft graces which compose the proper ornament of her sex.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ Ibid.: 343/344.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.: 35/36.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.: 38.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.: 39.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.: 245.

Hume clearly delineated male and female virtues. The male virtues are strength, bravery, intelligence – the active virtues; the female virtues are those ‘amiable weaknesses’ that make women good companions, wives and mothers. Hume does not allow that strength, intelligence and bravery are universal characteristics; rather they are ‘male virtues’ which some women are able to ape. Hume may have respected viragos and heroines but he respected them for their ability to behave like men. Although Hume criticised Knox’s rage and bigotry, there are similarities between them. Both clearly addressed their work to other men, excluding any female readers; both had a gendered notion of virtue. Knox wrote of ‘our brethren’ and asked if ‘we’ could watch a woman wreck ‘our’ nation. Hume, when assessing Elizabeth I, asked if ‘we’ would consider her as a girlfriend or wife. That Knox wrote to and for men is not surprising. That Hume also wrote to and for men is more surprising, given his consideration of women’s achievements and contributions to national success. Although Hume was more positive about women he still gave virtue a gender. He wrote, like Knox, of the male virtues of strength, bravery and intelligence but, unlike Knox, allowed that some women could demonstrate these qualities. Knox was horrified and appalled by powerful women while Hume praised them for their behaviour. However, he also argued that this made them less feminine and so less appealing to men. Both men wrote that women should be soft and tender, sympathetic and caring. Hume was more ‘modern’ than Knox and, as Pocock argues, respected viragos and heroines but he thought they were exceptional. In general, he argued that women should have ‘those soft graces’ which made them suitable wives and mothers.

Women in eighteenth century Scotland

Outside of queens and aristocrats women had little involvement in conventional Scottish political life. There are clear parallels between women and the lower orders, with both invoked as a problem that had to be dealt with. Rosalind Mitchison and Leah Leneman have written two thoughtful studies on sexuality and social control and concluded that “although Scotland ceased to be a church-ruled society by around 1780 ... it did continue to have a keen sense of itself as a moral nation, and to be

affronted by sexual lapses.”¹⁷⁸ And it was women who were adjudged to be largely responsible for those sexual lapses. Women, like the lower orders, had no conventional political role but they did have an economic role. More women were employed in Scottish mills than English ones as it was cheaper to employ women, giving the Scots an important advantage in the market. By the 1830s at least a quarter of looms in south Scotland were worked by women. While women may have had no conventional political role they took part in ‘unconventional’ politics, such as popular disturbances and food riots. This is an intriguing example of using weakness as strength: the authorities disliked arresting and indicting women and soldiers were reluctant to fire on them. And of course women, who took charge of domestic matters, were more aware of prices rises, food shortages and their effect on family life.

James Buchan has an intriguing, though flawed, argument on women in eighteenth-century Scotland. He argues that the Scottish Enlightenment was essentially a bachelor society that either lectured at or ignored women. Alongside this he argues that the more settled life after 1746 – with the decline in superstition, improvements in public health and greater prosperity – favoured “the less dominant sections of society, notably women and children.”¹⁷⁹ Buchan argues that the Scots had two approaches to women: the first, that women were a civilising force on men; the second, that there had to be sexual division of labour as women were too silly for serious business. I would disagree. Buchan, in arguing that there were only two approaches to women, ignores John Millar’s work.¹⁸⁰ Millar argued that the condition of women was not improved “by every circumstance which tends to create more attention to the pleasure of sex, and to increase the value of those occupations that are suited to the female character...”¹⁸¹ He argued that in commercial societies women were increasingly seen as property and that the natural tendency of great luxury was to diminish the rank and dignity of women: “In a simple age, the free intercourse of the sexes is attended with no bad consequences; but in opulent and

¹⁷⁸ Mitchison and Leneman 1998: 2.

¹⁷⁹ 2003: 241.

¹⁸⁰ John Millar, 1735-1801, philosopher, historian and Professor of Civil Law at the University of Glasgow. Works include *Origin of the Distinction of Ranks*, 1771.

¹⁸¹ 1806: 57.

luxurious nations, it gives rise to licentious and dissolute manners, inconsistent with good order, and with the general interest of society.”¹⁸²

However, Millar was one of the few Scottish thinkers to consider the impact of commercial advances on women as individuals. When women were not ignored they were advised as to how they could help civilise men. Women were told their company refined men's tempers and behaviour. Henry Mackenzie, whose work will be examined in greater detail in Part Three, Chapter 7, would argue for this, as would James Hutton.¹⁸³ In his 1794 *Investigation of the Principles of Knowledge* Hutton argued that, although the tide of opulence threatened to sweep away virtue and happiness, women had the power to save society. They could be an instrument for promoting virtue in men. While such an approach credits women with a certain degree of intelligence it values them primarily in relation to men, in relation to how they can serve and help men. Women could not be virtuous but could inculcate it in others.

If women could not be virtuous then they could be moral. This attitude will be reflected in Carmichael and Hutcheson's characterisation of Pufendorf's 'simple' and 'intensive' reputation. Women's morality, especially sexual, was of great concern to many eighteenth-century commentators. William Creech, for example, wrote of women's changing lives in Edinburgh and used such examples to demonstrate social corruption.¹⁸⁴ Creech wrote that in 1763 any instance of infidelity by a woman would be punished by church censure, leading to her banishment from society, her company shunned by any man who paid regard to character. But by 1783, he argued, the law punishing adultery with death was unused, church censure was unused and separation and divorce were becoming frequent. Divorced and separated women were still received socially, much to his disgust. General sexual morality was increasingly lax: in 1763 fines collected by the Kirk treasurer for illegitimate children were £154; by 1783 they were £600 and rising. In 1763 there were only five or six brothels and only a few street prostitutes but by 1783 there were

¹⁸² Ibid.: 101.

¹⁸³ James Hutton, 1726-1797, Scottish writer and geologist.

¹⁸⁴ William Creech, 1745-1815, Scottish bookseller and writer.

many, many more. "Every quarter of the city and suburbs was infested with multitudes of females abandoned to vice, and a great many at a very early period of life..."¹⁸⁵ For Creech this was not a personal tragedy for the women involved but a social nuisance. He makes it clear what role women should play in society when discussing their education. In 1763 the education of the daughters of the 'best' families was intended to embellish their minds and train them in the necessary domestic arts; by 1783 even tradesmen's daughters spent the mornings dressing up and shopping for nice things. Caring for the family was delegated to the housekeeper, with young women spending too much time reading romantic novels. This set a bad example: "Every rank is eager to copy the manners and fashions of their superiors; and this has in all ages been the case. Of what importance, then, is correct and exemplary manners in the higher ranks to the good order of society!"¹⁸⁶ Women were expected not only to be a civilising influence on men but also on other women and the lower orders.¹⁸⁷

Buchan argues that life was opening up for women but his definition of opening up entails access to the arts – painting, reading, writing novels – and little else. He also argues that it was advantageous for women that the household became more firmly located as female territory. He has a rather patronising concept of women's needs, of houses "filled up with a companionable clutter of teatables, china, silver, portraits."¹⁸⁸ I would question how this opened life up for women. Some may have had more comfortable homes but they were still relegated to the private, domestic sphere and not even considered for a huge majority of social and political rights. Buchan summarises changes in relation to women in eighteenth century Scotland:

¹⁸⁵ Creech 1982: 36/37.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.: 40.

¹⁸⁷ This only applied to elite women, of course. Women from the lower orders, the labouring class worked as hard as their men in the fields, farms and factories and so their understanding and comprehension were as damaged as their men's.

¹⁸⁸ Buchan 2003: 242.

Edinburgh spilled a certain amount of philosophy on women: God or nature's purposes for females, the proper education of young girls, the mental or sentimental differences between the sexes, the institutions of marriage, and so on. If there was a development in the town's philosophical approach, it was this: women started as items of property and ended as items of emotion.¹⁸⁹

However, women were both and neither was terribly positive. Being an item of property means that you are valued not for yourself but rather for your utility to others. It dehumanises you and makes you an object rather than a person. Being an item of emotion means having to behave in a certain way in order to ensure love and protection. Women are commended for behaviour that makes men's lives easier and socialised into certain behaviour. For example, Henry Cockburn wrote of his mother that she was the best woman he had ever known because of "her kindness, her piety, her devotion to her family, and her earnest, gentle and Christian anxiety for their happiness in this life..."¹⁹⁰ She was valuable not as an individual but as a care-provider. Her excellence lay in her devotion to others rather than in her personal qualities or her intelligence. She was 'a good woman' not because she was a virtuous moral agent but because she fulfilled society's expectations of her. This is still a central issue in feminist thought but even in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there was a continuing discourse on gender roles and appropriate social behaviour in both sexes. Knox, Carmichael, Hutcheson, Ferguson, Smith and Mackenzie, amongst others, contributed to this debate. Any discussion of citizenship and civic humanism should include a consideration of the role in, and exclusion of, women from public life. Civic humanism specifically excludes the feminine and the effeminate and so we need to understand what is being excluded and why. There is also a 'feminist' discourse on the issues of sexual socialisation, power, political responsibility, effeminacy and virtue from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which will be considered in the Coda.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.: 260.

¹⁹⁰ 1971: 2. Henry Cockburn, 1779-1854, Scottish lawyer. His *Memorials of His Time*, written 1821-1830 but published posthumously in 1856, is a valuable source of information. He was politically connected (he was Henry Dundas' nephew), was taught by Dugald Stewart, knew Ferguson, Mackenzie, Scott and attended the first Burns supper. He was also one of the lawyers in the infamous Burke and Hare trial, defending Helen MacDougal, Burke's wife (who was acquitted).

Part Two: Social and political philosophy

Chapter Three: Gershom Carmichael and Francis Hutcheson

In exploring the Scottish debate on citizenship and political responsibility, it is important to note that this debate has been conducted over a longer period of time than is normally considered. I see the Scottish Enlightenment as a process, not an event, and so it is necessary to have a broader understanding of it in terms of time. As noted in my discussion of Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun (in Part One, Chapter 1: 2), my focus is on the post-Union period and I argue that Carmichael and Hutcheson, two thinkers usually characterised as grandfather or father of the Scottish Enlightenment, need instead to be considered as part of it. Issues that would be central to later Scottish Enlightenment social and political thought, such as the challenges of commercial society, the effect on human character of increased wealth and luxury and changing social relations can all be found in their work. Carmichael and Hutcheson were also important as teachers. Carmichael became a Regent at the University of Glasgow in 1694, retaining this position until 1727 when he became the first holder of the Chair of Moral Philosophy. One of his pupils at Glasgow was Hutcheson, who succeeded Carmichael in the Chair and used his predecessor's annotated edition of Samuel Pufendorf's *De Officio* to teach his students (one of whom was Adam Smith). Carmichael and Hutcheson were, through their establishment of a syllabus, teaching and writing, integral to the Scottish debate on political responsibility. And, as argued in the Introduction, Carmichael's work on logic contributes to my approach to historical material. I found Carmichael's work particularly useful not only as it gives a clear guide to how he wished his own work to be understood but also because it provides, in effect, a contemporary methodology for analysing Scottish Enlightenment works.

1. - Gershom Carmichael

Carmichael's contribution to the Scottish Enlightenment has been unjustly ignored.¹⁹¹ Richard Teichgraeber has asserted, wrongly, that Hutcheson was "the patriarch of a high-level intellectual awakening in Scotland..."¹⁹² This not only ignores thinkers such as Mair, Buchanan, Knox and Sibbald but also grossly undervalues Carmichael's work. It is generally agreed that "(n)o discussion of the origins of the Scottish Enlightenment would be complete without an expression of homage to Gershom Carmichael..."¹⁹³ However, there is often little beyond a name-check and very little useful information to be found on his writing. Sir William Hamilton made the frequently cited remark that Carmichael was the real founder of the 'Scottish School' of philosophy. James McCosh echoed this sentiment, calling him the bond between the old and new philosophy in Scotland and the father of Scottish philosophy.¹⁹⁴ W. R. Scott wrote that he left an honourable name as a thinker.¹⁹⁵ While there has been comment on Carmichael's personal importance there has been too little consideration of his actual work, an omission I shall seek to rectify.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹¹ Gershom Carmichael, 1672-1729. Born in London, his father was Alexander Carmichael, a Scottish Presbyterian clergyman banished by the Scottish Privy Council for his religious opinions. The name Gershom comes from the Bible, the book of Exodus. Gershom, which literally means 'banishment', was the first son of Moses (with Zipporah): "And she bore him a son, and he called his name Gershom: for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land." (Exodus 2: 22) It may give us some insight into Gershom's father's mindset (and opinion of himself) that he chose this name! (I am indebted to Owen Dudley Edwards for alerting me to this) Gershom Carmichael was educated at the University of Edinburgh, graduating in 1691. He was appointed Regent at Saint Andrews in 1693 but resigned later the same year to receive an M.A. from Glasgow, where he became a Regent in 1694.

Carmichael published two sets of philosophical theses on which students were examined, *Theses Philosophicae...Sub Praesidio Gerschomi Carmichael, P.P.*, Glasgow 1699, 1707; an edition of Samuel Pufendorf's 1673 *Officio Hominis et Civis juxta Legem Naturalem, Libri Duo* (The Duty of Man and Citizen According to the Natural Law, Two Books), Glasgow 1718, Edinburgh 1724; an introduction to logic and the psychology of powers, *Breviusculus Introductio ad Logicam*, Glasgow 1718, Edinburgh 1722; a work on metaphysics, *Synopsis Theologiae Naturalis*, Edinburgh 1729.

¹⁹² 1779: 128.

¹⁹³ Moore and Silverthorne, 'Gershom Carmichael and the natural jurisprudence tradition in eighteenth century Scotland', pp.73-87 in Hont and Ignatieff (eds.) 1983: 73.

¹⁹⁴ This title is applied by some to Carmichael, by others to Hutcheson. As W. R. Scott notes, "Scottish philosophy has had so many reputed fathers..." (1900: 14) However, its mother is never considered.

¹⁹⁵ 1900: 12.

¹⁹⁶ There are two published translations of Carmichael's work: Carmichael 1985, compiled and published by John Lenhart, and Moore and Silverthorne (eds.) 2002. The main works used here are: *A Short Introduction to Logic* (pp.287-317 in Moore and Silverthorne (eds.) 2002, referred to as Carmichael A); *Supplements and Observations upon Samuel Pufendorf's On the Duty of Man and*

Carmichael's philosophy is remarkable. He justified the natural rights of individuals, including the right to self-defence; he argued that slavery was incompatible with the rights of man; he argued that subjects had the right to resist a ruler who exceeded the limits of their power. He appealed to the authority of Grotius, Pufendorf and Locke but also drew on the Reformed and Presbyterian theology taught in Scottish universities, which argued that respecting an individual's natural rights signified one's reverence for God's creation.¹⁹⁷ This demonstrates that Carmichael was part of a continuing Scottish philosophical and political debate. While the Scottish Enlightenment was open to outside (especially Continental) influences, there was already a distinctly Scottish tradition of examining, amongst other concepts, the nature of political responsibility to which Carmichael contributed. His work is also linked to the formation of Smith's economic ideas.¹⁹⁸

Carmichael taught that men had social rights and responsibilities; that men should be valued for what they did, not for what they had; he taught that men had a duty to engage with world as best they could. He wanted his students and readers to think about the world and to use philosophy to enlarge their understanding of it:

Citizen according to the law of Nature (pp.9-217 in Moore and Silverthorne (eds.) 2002, referred to as Carmichael B); *Philosophical Theses, 1707*, (pp.353-376 in Moore and Silverthorne (eds.) 2002, referred to as Carmichael C); *Supplement II, On the Fundamental Precepts of the Natural Law* (pp.9-15 in Carmichael 1985, referred to as Carmichael 1); *Supplement III, Of the Duties of Man toward his mind* (pp.17-25 in Carmichael 1985, referred to as Carmichael 2).

¹⁹⁷ Hugo Grotius, 1583-1645, jurist and theologian; Samuel Pufendorf, 1632-1694, jurist and historian. Carmichael was part of an international academic community and notably corresponded with Jean Barbeyrac, 1672-1744, one of the eighteenth-century's authorities on natural law and an important disseminator of both Protestant natural law and natural rights theories. He and Carmichael exchanged views on Pufendorf and Barbeyrac expressly acknowledged Carmichael's assistance in clarifying certain issues in Pufendorf.

¹⁹⁸ Nero Naldi gives a technical argument for Carmichael's influence on Smith's concept of supply and demand. He argues that Carmichael gave a good general description of these, "Hutcheson improves on this treatment, and Smith builds upon the basis provided by Hutcheson." ('Gershom Carmichael on 'Demand' and 'Difficulty of Acquiring': Some evidence from the first edition of Carmichael's commentary to Pufendorf's *De Officio*', pp.456-470, Vol. 40(4), Nov. 1993, *The Scottish Journal of Political Economy*, 40, 1993: 466)

the study of philosophy does not consist in mere reading, nor in the understanding and memorizing of what they read, but above all in the exercise of judgement and reason, by which they may come to see the truth as it were with their own eyes, by perceiving the self-evidence of principles and seeing the necessary consequences which lead to the conclusions that follow from them.¹⁹⁹

Carmichael's contemporaries and immediate successors regarded him as an important figure but his works have since been largely ignored, primarily because they were in Latin and there were, until recently, no widely available translations. Another problem with assessing Carmichael's contribution is that, like Hutcheson later, much of his time and energy went into his teaching rather than his writing. He taught his students to examine society and their relationship with it: "And this teaching is worthy of praise, by virtue of the commendation both of the judgement cultivated and the honesty with which [Carmichael] everywhere examines the species of the good man..."²⁰⁰ Carmichael wanted to improve on Scotland's already creditable academic situation and wrote that: "in my endeavour to adorn the *Sparta* where I was born ... I decided not to burden my students any longer with dictates of systems of philosophical science in the received manner."²⁰¹ He was one of the first in Scotland to use Isaac Newton's work in his teaching, introduced students to Grotius and Pufendorf's work and made Pufendorf's work available for general study for the first time.

¹⁹⁹ Carmichael A: 290.

²⁰⁰ From a 1727 review of Carmichael's 1724 annotated edition of *De Officio*, reprinted in Carmichael 1985: 45.

²⁰¹ Carmichael B: 16. Italics in original. It is unclear what Carmichael meant by "the *Sparta* where I was born" in the context of this quote. As previously noted, he was born in London but spent his whole academic and teaching career in Scotland, first at Saint Andrews and then at Glasgow. So *Sparta* cannot refer specifically to London. It could refer in general to Great Britain, as Carmichael was an upholder of the Union and an active supporter of the Hanoverian succession. However, I believe Carmichael is referring specifically to his work in Scotland. The students whose burden he decided to remove were those he taught at Glasgow; the comment was made in his 1718/1724 *Supplements and Observations upon Samuel Pufendorf's On the Duty of Man and Citizen according to the law of Nature*, immediately following a paragraph defending Scottish universities. He cites (and paraphrases) Sir Richard Steele's argument that "in the Scottish academies they scrupulously abstain from every attempt to investigate the truth deeply, or make further advances in the sciences." (Ibid.: 15) Carmichael argued in riposte: "It has been for a long time a concern of the *Scottish* universities to allow their students to drink from the pure and abundant springs of every discipline, whatever may be said by some who pronounce on matters they have little investigated." (Ibid. Italics in original) Within two years of Carmichael's appointment at Glasgow he was presented with a document from the Visitation Committee (which had been charged with investigating teaching methods 1695-1697) that complained of his innovative teaching. Similar complaints would be made about Hutcheson.

In his own work, Carmichael set down “three irreducible but complementary duties or laws of nature: that all men act in ways which signify their love and veneration of God; that each man cultivate his own happiness and in particular the faculties of his mind; and that each promote and preserve sociability.”²⁰² Although insisting that each man must, in proportion to his capacity, procure the common good of the whole human race, Carmichael allowed for a certain degree of self-interest: “each man must take care of himself and advance his own harmless advantage.”²⁰³ Man’s nature was such that he needed the help of others for the simple preservation of life, to say nothing of living in any degree of comfort; it was also such that he was willing and able to help others. Men had “various gifts of soul and body with which they may do more good to each other than any animal can, and they are well disposed to do so.”²⁰⁴ It followed, therefore, that sociableness was an inherent survival strategy: “that is, that men be easily joined with one another in reciprocal accord, and so behave toward one another that they show that they take due account, not each one of himself alone, but of others...”²⁰⁵ He went on to argue that humans live socially not just for physical safety but also because this promotes mental health and develops our reason and “the soundness of the human race...”²⁰⁶ Sociableness was, therefore, an essential quality and needed to be fostered. For Carmichael, harmless self-interest did not clash with sociableness but complemented it and promoting one’s own good could also promote the good of others. When the advantage of different men collided each man should exercise “a certain particular care” about himself and his affairs and this could promote society’s interests as well as that of the individual.²⁰⁷

²⁰² Moore and Silverthorne, ‘Natural Sociability and Natural Rights in the Moral Philosophy of Gershom Carmichael’, pp.1-12 in Hope (ed.) 1984: 3.

²⁰³ Carmichael I: 11.

²⁰⁴ Carmichael C: 358.

²⁰⁵ Carmichael I: 12.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.: 13.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.: 15.

for unless this exercise of care for one's own interests and concerns should be done, the utmost confusion of all things would be brought in, with the greater part of mankind, while relying on the help of someone else, succumbing to folly and neglecting to cultivate the resources granted by nature to the human race. As a result it would follow from the opposite that it would come to pass, that no-one could firmly promise anything to himself from others, or erect his own calculations on the help of others.²⁰⁸

What was good for the individual was good for society. This presumed compatibility of individual and social interests would be prevalent in later Scottish Enlightenment social and political thought. Another theme of Carmichael's work that featured in later Scottish Enlightenment thought was luxury and its corrupting effects. He commented that each man should remember that, to cater for his needs and those of his dependants, a limited and modest amount of money and possessions were enough. A man should avoid extending his concerns and desires, since otherwise he would start to care too much for unimportant material objects. As men begin to acquire possessions they want more and are scared to lose what they have: "a restless anxiety often tortures men as much in the protection of their goods as in their acquisition. And everything must be abandoned when we die."²⁰⁹ Luxurious pleasures might be tempting but should be avoided as they weaken the powers of the mind and body and "are wont to render a man useless for carrying out certain serious enterprises..."²¹⁰ Carmichael argued, as would later Scottish Enlightenment thinkers, that luxurious pleasures distracted men from important public duties and corrupted their capabilities and values. Such pleasures "imperceptibly steal away time destined for better uses, they very often use up the supply of external goods necessary for living comfortably, and in other respects they are not rarely joined with harm."²¹¹ He argued for moderation as men had a responsibility to take care of themselves: to cultivate their minds; to preserve their strength; to develop an habitual spirit of courage; to accustom themselves to duty.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Carmichael B: 62.

²¹⁰ Carmichael 2: 20.

²¹¹ Ibid.

Related to Carmichael's discussion of luxury was his discussion of duty. He argued it was a duty incumbent on all men, regardless of rank or station, to choose a life that was honourable, beneficial and consistent with their ability and fortune. He argued that every man needed a goal, a purpose: he "should set before himself an end worthy of his nature, and should use means fitly chosen for its achievement; and thus not wander through this world but proceed purposefully..."²¹² He argued that this applied particularly to the rich, those whom "a kinder fortune has granted the ability to lead their lives without gain amassed by their own toil..."²¹³ They were fortunate as they had the opportunity to be educated, to travel and to engage with the wider world, but these privileges were not without entailments. Members of this privileged elite were bound to watch over not only their own affairs but also those of their country. If this elite were to hold that they had a reputation and authority above others and wished to be respected, they had to deserve this respect. It would be unseemly and unsuitable if such people "should be useless burdens on the earth, or drones, born to feed on the fruits of other people's toil."²¹⁴ They had a duty, both to themselves and to others, to justify their advantages and use what skills and abilities they had in the service of their society and state. The privileged elite needed to learn that honour and reputation did not come from being a good socialite or well-dressed, but from performing socially useful acts: that true reputation came from contributing to society in a positive way. The privileged elite needed to consider how their behaviour affected their capacity to act virtuously and how it impacted on others.²¹⁵

The privileged elite had a duty to serve the state but so too did the other ranks. Carmichael wrote of a 'double obligation' – the obligation between citizens and the obligation between rulers and ruled. The obligation between citizens was to do all one could to help other men; the obligation between rulers and ruled was that the rulers would promote the interests of the state and its people while the ruled would obey just laws. The rulers also had an obligation to recognise and respect the

²¹² Carmichael B: 60.

²¹³ Carmichael 2: 24.

²¹⁴ Ibid.: 25.

²¹⁵ Carmichael used the example of gambling, an activity he argued brought no benefit to mankind, gave rise to many evils and took men away from honourable ways of increasing their estate. "And of course ... it is vile and dishonourable to set out to enrich oneself at others' expense without deserving it..." (Carmichael B: 110)

contribution of all men to the state's good, not just that of 'great men'. Pufendorf had distinguished between 'simple' reputation, which belonged to morally good and law-abiding men, and 'intensive' reputation, which was the recognition of honour by other men.²¹⁶ Carmichael argued that both had a moral foundation and that anyone could have this simple reputation, even slaves. "It is inhuman and contrary to reason that simple reputation in civil society should be thought lacking in anyone on account of a condition [slavery] which contains no moral turpitude."²¹⁷ The elite sought intensive reputation but, Carmichael argued, needed to earn it. Those who worked for the greater good would and should be rewarded, in proportion to their efforts: "It is natural that those who are regarded as making a greater contribution to promoting the interest and splendor of human society should be honoured above the rest and distinguished with greater honors."²¹⁸ However, even those who contributed in small ways could have simple reputation. Carmichael's characterisation of Pufendorf's 'simple' and 'intensive' reputation would be developed by Hutcheson and aspects of it would be seen in Ferguson and Smith's work. Ferguson would emphasise that the privileged elite had a duty to contribute to society, agreeing with Carmichael that reputation and respect had to be earned. This would be reflected in his exclusive, martial citizenship. Smith, conversely, would stress that the lower ranks could and did contribute to society's good and that they deserved the respect of the rulers. This would be reflected in his more accessible, economic citizenship.

Carmichael also discussed marriage, sexual relations and gender roles in relation to social duty. Marriage, he wrote, legitimised sexuality and propagation and was "the seedbed of the human race."²¹⁹ Consequently, he condemned any sexual activity outside marriage, including bestiality and homosexuality. However, he did not only condemn such behaviour for its 'inherent' immorality but because also it interfered with family life. Family life was important because it was in society's interests to have responsible individuals and marriage was "the only honorable manner of

²¹⁶ Although Pufendorf's work is important, I will not be discussing it in this Thesis. My focus will be on Carmichael and Hutcheson's use of it, as signified by the phrase 'Carmichael and Hutcheson's characterisation of Pufendorf's 'simple' and 'intensive' reputation'.

²¹⁷ Carmichael B: 194.

²¹⁸ Ibid.: 194/195.

²¹⁹ Ibid.: 216.

procreation ... which permits a suitable education and formation for each of the children.”²²⁰ In marriage, husband and wife became a unit and constituted one moral agent and, Carmichael commented, the custom of all ages and nations had assigned this prerogative to the man. He did not challenge this assignation (which Hutcheson would), and though he discussed women’s roles and responsibilities he barely considered that they might have rights (which Hutcheson would). Children needed two parents and thus men needed to know their wives were faithful, “as it is obviously inconsistent with the character of this society that the women should go with other men...”²²¹ Women should only have one sexual partner to ensure both their offspring’s legitimacy and a man’s protection. Men should also be monogamous but for different reasons: polygamy oppresses women, who have to be content with just a small piece of a marital relationship; polygamy oppresses men because there are not enough women to go round and “very many ... are compelled for this reason to do without wives.”²²² He portrayed women as a means to an end – the end being a populous, virtuous people – rather than as individuals with moral worth. While, sadly, this was not unusual in early eighteenth-century Scotland it makes Hutcheson’s more liberal, considerate attitude all the more surprising. It also seems incongruous with Carmichael’s opinion on slavery. As noted earlier, he saw slavery as a condition that contained no moral turpitude. Men were not and should not be property and nothing should move a man “from the class of person into the class of things.”²²³ He wrote that men should never be considered as possessions: “a man is never to be considered among the goods of his creditor, whatever thing or service he may owe him or a criminal may owe society. For men are not among the objects over which God has allowed the human race to enjoy dominion...”²²⁴ The exercise of slavery – “*owning* slaves like cattle” – was a great shame and “*a sure sign of the death of sociability*.”²²⁵ Despite this, he wrote of women as goods, as a social resource that men had a right to.

²²⁰ Ibid.: 128.

²²¹ Ibid.: 129.

²²² Ibid.: 130.

²²³ Ibid.: 140.

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Ibid.: 144; 145. Italics in original.

2. - Francis Hutcheson

Carmichael had wanted to inculcate intellectual curiosity in his students and encouraged them to engage with the world. One student he certainly succeeded with was Francis Hutcheson.²²⁶ Like Carmichael, Hutcheson, “one of the most admired moral philosophers of his time”, has been largely ignored.²²⁷ Like Carmichael, his work was better understood and appreciated by contemporaries than by succeeding generations. Like Carmichael, he taught and encouraged his successors. “The specialized leaders of Scottish intellectual life later in the century had almost all passed through his classes in their teens, and their personalities and intellects had developed under his persuasion, both in and out of class.”²²⁸

Hutcheson is often characterised as an influence on, rather than member of, the Scottish Enlightenment for two reasons: he was Irish, not Scottish and he arrived in Scotland in 1730 and published no significant work thereafter in his lifetime. However, if we are to regard the Scottish Enlightenment as a process, rather than an event, the two reasons are nullified. He was educated in and an educator in Scotland; during his time as a student in Glasgow he absorbed Scottish influences and values and inculcated these in his time as a professor. He may not have written anything significant in the years following 1730 but his earlier writings were part of his intellectual approach and influenced his students and readers. One of the difficulties in dealing with Hutcheson, as with Carmichael, is that his enthusiasm and genius were more often in his teaching than his writing. He was, by all accounts, a brilliant

²²⁶ Francis Hutcheson, 1694-1746. He was born in Ireland, the son and grandson of Scottish Presbyterian clergymen. He attended the University of Glasgow, studying under Carmichael. As noted earlier, Hutcheson succeeded Carmichael in the Glasgow Chair of the Moral Philosophy in 1729. Appointments to this Chair, in a period of only thirty-seven years, were Carmichael, Hutcheson, Thomas Craigie, Adam Smith and Thomas Reid. There was a personal, as well as professional, connection between Carmichael and Reid – his son Patrick married Reid’s daughter Martha.

²²⁷ Phillipson 1989: 43.

²²⁸ Mitchison 1970: 332. Smith was his most famous pupil and he was generous in acknowledging Hutcheson’s work. In a letter to Dr Archibald Davidson, the Principal of the University of Glasgow, Smith wrote of having been appointed to the Chair of Moral Philosophy “to which the abilities and Virtues of the never to be forgotten Dr Hutcheson had given a superior degree of illustration.” (16/11/1787 in Mossner and Ross (eds.) 1977: 309)

and persuasive teacher, with his classes always overbooked.²²⁹ Dugald Stewart called him “profound and eloquent” but acknowledged that this might seem unjustified to those who could only read him: “Those who have derived their knowledge of Dr Hutcheson solely from his publications, may, perhaps, be inclined to dispute the propriety of the epithet *eloquent*...”²³⁰

Since the 1970s, however, there has been a re-evaluation of his work.²³¹ He has been declared the founder of modern aesthetics, with a small but highly significant body of writings on aesthetics and criticism.²³² His work on ethics has been credited with influencing Kant, amongst others.²³³ Of more relevance to this Thesis, however, is his social and political thought, to which not enough attention has been paid. Here Hutcheson sought to combine civic humanism and the natural rights tradition, to

²²⁹ He lectured five days a week, on topics such as natural religion, morals, jurisprudence, political economy and government. He was also active in university politics and administration. Although he enjoyed his work he had a complaint that may be familiar to some of today’s academics: “He complained that teaching duties and other academic matters did not give him the uninterrupted time he needed to write...” (Mautner, ‘Introduction’, pp.3-87 in Hutcheson 1993: 4/5)

²³⁰ Stewart, ‘Account of the Life and Writings of Adam Smith, LL.D.’, pp.269-351 in Smith 1980: 271; 333. Italics in original. Alexander Carlyle, one of Hutcheson’s students, wrote of him: “He delivered his lectures without notes, walking backwards and forwards in the area of his room. As his elocution was good, and his voice and manners pleasing, he raised the attention of his hearers at all times; and when the subject led him to explain and enforce the moral virtues and duties, he displayed a fervent and persuasive eloquence which was irresistible.” (MDCCCLX: 70)

Dugald Stewart, 1753-1828, Scottish philosopher. He studied under Adam Ferguson and later held the Edinburgh Chair of Moral Philosophy, teaching Brougham, Cockburn, Scott and James Mill. He was the first to compare Edinburgh to Athens, giving rise to its moniker of ‘the Athens of the North’. Alexander Carlyle, 1722-1805, author, minister and Moderator of the General Assembly.

²³¹ Hutcheson’s works include: *Reflections Upon Laughter*, published in the Dublin Journal 1725-6; *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue: in Two Treatises. In which The Principles of the late Earl of Shaftsbury are explain’d and defended, against the Author of the Fable of the Bees: And the Ideas of Moral Good and Evil are establish’d, according to the Sentiments of the antient Moralists. With an Attempt to introduce a Mathematical Calculation in Subjects of Morality*, first published in 1725 with a second edition in 1726 [W. R. Scott’s comment on this – “the overburdened title page” (1900: 31) could apply to many seventeenth and eighteenth century texts]; *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions. With Illustrations on the Moral Sense*, 1728; *On the Social Nature of Man*, a lecture, then essay, delivered when he took the Glasgow Chair on 3/11/1730 [this was comparatively inaccessible until recently as it was published in Latin and not presented in an English translation until Hutcheson 1993]; *A Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy*, 1747, a classroom text for students; his main work, *A System of Moral Philosophy*, which was published posthumously in 1755, although written between 1735-1737.

²³² For more on this, see Hutcheson 1973.

²³³ Hutcheson’s *A System of Moral Philosophy* was translated into German in 1756, the *Inquiry* following in 1760 and the *Essay* in 1762. Klemme assesses the impact of Hutcheson’s work: “The influence of Hutcheson’s philosophy in Germany can hardly be underestimated, and it certainly deserves a book-length study. For Kant and many others it was Hutcheson, not Shaftsbury, Hume or Smith, who was the most prominent representative of moral sense philosophy.” (‘Introduction’, pp.v-x in Klemme (ed.) 2000a: x)

understand human nature in order to improve individuals and their society.²³⁴ This work had an overarching value: “There is no part of philosophy of more importance than a just knowledge of human nature and its various powers and dispositions.”²³⁵ Given this, he argued that the intention of moral philosophy should be to understand how to direct men to the course of action that will promote the greatest happiness and perfection. In all men there was a moral sense, which made them appreciate publicly useful actions and kind affections. In all men there was also a sense of self-love and it was necessary to make this and morality coincide: “to engage men in publicly useful actions, is certainly the most necessary point in morals.”²³⁶ It was necessary because man could not exist without society: men were social beings and had “a natural impulse to society with their fellows...”²³⁷ Thus, like Carmichael he emphasised the importance of society and of sociableness. Men sought others not only for company but also to help in the provision of life’s necessities. It was obvious that humans needed a great many things to support life – food, shelter, clothes and tools – that they could not produce alone. A man alone could barely produce the basics, let alone any conveniences, but by working in co-operation with others he was able to produce all the essentials. Hutcheson outlined his theory of the social division of labour, where one man would become an expert in agriculture, another in animal husbandry, another in masonry and so on. This process, “by assigning to one, a certain sort of work of one kind, in which he will soon acquire skill and dexterity, and to another work of a different kind”, was more efficient than if an individual “were obliged to employ himself, by turns, in all the different sorts of labour requisite for his subsistence, without sufficient dexterity in any.”²³⁸ This division of labour enabled larger societies to exist, a distinct advantage as greater numbers made it easier to defend territory, repel invaders, cultivate forests, drain

²³⁴ The main works used here are: *Illustrations on the Moral Sense* (Hutcheson 1971); *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections* (Hutcheson 1972); *An Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design* (Hutcheson 1973); *A System of Moral Philosophy* (Hutcheson 1989a); *An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (pp.1-276 in Hutcheson 1990, referred to as Hutcheson A); ‘*On Human Nature: Reflections on our common systems of morality*’ and ‘*On the Social Nature of Man*’ (Hutcheson 1993).

²³⁵ 1973: 23.

²³⁶ 1971: 160.

²³⁷ 1989a: 34.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*: 288.

marshes, construct homes and necessary buildings – in short, to generally improve conditions.

Society was necessary both for man's physical and mental health. Social interaction was essential to awaken man's moral sense as men learnt the moral value of their actions from the responses of others. Smith would argue on similar lines, writing of society as a mirror. Hutcheson's moral sense consisted of both doing what was right and what one could do to benefit society. Like Carmichael, Hutcheson reassured his readers that self-interest was not necessarily pernicious and could be valuable to society. A moral agent should see himself as part of society and so to protect and preserve society was to protect and preserve oneself. Hutcheson commented that moralists wrote much on how horrible, unappealing and unattractive people were: "We scarce ever hear from them of the bright side of humane nature."²³⁹ They did not discuss natural sociableness, natural affection, compassion, gratitude or the delight people took in the esteem and honour of others. Some moralists argued that individuals were interested only in themselves and sought only their own advantage, pleasure and glory:

When meeting in the market-place for the sake of commerce, everyone works for his own profit; when gathered for the purpose of recreation everyone seeks to get the others to laugh with him in order to assert his own superiority over those he ridicules; or he reviles those who are absent, or boasts about himself and his possessions. And when the conversation turns to more serious matters almost everyone, considering himself superior in wisdom, seeks glory and intellectual domination...²⁴⁰

²³⁹ 1993:100.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.: 145. Here he is referring to writers like Bernard Mandeville, "who will twist Self-Love into a thousand Shapes, than allow any other Principle and Approbation that Interest..." (Hutcheson A: 114) Mandeville, c.1670-1733, physician and author. His *Fable of the Bees* argued that public benefits were the result of private vices, which stimulated economic growth, provided employment and kept money in circulation. Moralists might seek a virtuous country while economists sought a prosperous one but the two were incompatible. Hutcheson was particularly riled by Mandeville and, as Jensen notes, "there is hardly a work by Hutcheson in which space is not devoted to attacking Mandeville's cynical egoism." (1971: 14)

Hutcheson disagreed, arguing that men were neither this selfish nor this self-obsessed, their affections not solely engaged by consideration of interest. His far more optimistic view was that men were inherently social creatures who sought and enjoyed the company of others:

Men of virtue, distinction, wit, and kindness often get together without expecting profit or glory, and without attempting to boast of themselves or to ridicule others. And when they discuss more serious matters in friendly conversation, all express their opinion freely, pleasantly, and considerately, without striving for glory or intellectual superiority.²⁴¹

Hutcheson, because of his concern with society, was concerned with the effects of increasing levels of consumption and luxury. He had a more developed and sophisticated level of socio-economic analysis than Carmichael, including an argument that the right to personal property was in the public good.²⁴² Universal industry was necessary for mankind's support but although man was naturally active he would rather perform pleasant, easy tasks than the drudgery involved in the production of necessities, so there needed to be strong motives and incentives to engage in difficult, dirtier work. The right to private property was one such incentive. Nothing excited a man as much as the hope of future wealth, ease and pleasure for himself and his family: "All these hopes are presented to men by securing to every one the fruits of his labours, that he may enjoy them, or dispose of them as he pleases."²⁴³ Men had a right to benefit from their labours, and money fairly earned and spent on improving one's quality of life was more than acceptable, but with this came the creeping spread of luxury. He did not simply condemn luxury and allowed that in certain circumstances it could encourage manufacturing and the arts. Men of higher fortune and station were able to indulge their appetites and buy unnecessary, expensive toys but this could spread to the lower orders, who always copied their superiors. Hutcheson argued that when the lower orders lived beyond their means

²⁴¹ 1993: 145.

²⁴² He discussed various economic issues in chapters of *A Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy* and *A System of Moral Philosophy*. In particular, he discussed (in Book 2, Chapter 12 of *System*) economic value, 'demand side' and 'supply side' factors and the importance of a common measure in establishing price and value. Edwin Cannan, in his influential 1929 introduction to Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, credited Hutcheson with influencing Smith's treatment of these issues.

²⁴³ 1989a: 321.

they called for higher wages and manufacturers were therefore forced to raise prices. As a result their goods would be priced out of the internal market and more difficult to sell abroad if a more sober and industrious nation could produce them more cheaply. Luxury could stimulate economic growth but could also smother it if left unchecked and uncontained.

Luxury also had social consequences and Hutcheson argued that, if left unchecked, it could encourage sensuality and selfishness. His moral concerns with sensuality seem to be solely for the elite. Luxury was discussed in relation to the lower orders in so far as it had economic consequences. It was discussed in relation to the elite in its effect on their character and quality of life. Sensual pleasures were damaging as they impaired a man's mental and physical health. In an increasing and increasingly commercial society the rich had more distractions and thus less inclination to improve their minds. They neglected the pleasures of the imagination for the pleasures of the flesh: "such poor empty minds have nothing but trifles to pursue..."²⁴⁴ Such sympathy for the rich would be seen again in Ferguson's work. The exercise of our intellectual faculties and powers was "one source of delight from the cradle to the grave", but the rich denied themselves this pleasure.²⁴⁵ Through this, through their ignorance of public affairs and inability to speak on them, they denied themselves the esteem of the wise. In this condition they valued themselves by their possessions and a man's worth was measured by his wealth not his character. People thought it a terrible thing to be poor but avoiding this should not be the priority: "Was any man ever ashamed of impoverishing himself to serve his Country, or his Friend?"²⁴⁶

In this increasingly commercial society it was what you had, not what you did, that was important and this was dangerous both for the individual and society. It was dangerous for individuals because their values and morals became warped. To bind one's worth to monetary possessions meant that if those went, so did society's respect: "No body pities him nor honours him: his personal Dignity was placed by

²⁴⁴ 1972: 112.

²⁴⁵ 1989a: 23.

²⁴⁶ Hutcheson A: 201.

himself in his Table, Equipage and Furniture; his Admirers placed it also in the same: When these are gone all is lost.”²⁴⁷ It was dangerous for society since public spirit and public virtue were neglected. An excess of sensual pleasures and a concentration on the personal, rather than the public, weakened a man and excluded “all manly improvement: the waste of time, the effeminacy, and sloth, and a thousand disorderly passions, break the natural strength of the soul, and the reins of self-government.”²⁴⁸ And if a man could not govern himself, how could he govern others? Sobriety (which he defined as a moderate, measured enjoyment of the nobler pleasures) was a virtue necessary to the state, for when the governing classes were in thrall to luxurious pleasures public duties were forgotten and public interest sacrificed.

As with Carmichael, Hutcheson’s discussion of luxury was related to his discussion of duty. Every individual, he argued, had a duty to mankind to follow some profession or business useful to the public good. For some this meant working in a factory; for others working in, and for, government. As regards the former, Hutcheson argued that national industry was vital, waxed eloquent on the dangers of sloth and stressed the importance of economic activities.²⁴⁹ Industrious foreigners should be invited to live and work in the country without persecution; encouragement should be given to marriage and to those who reared children to industrious work. Any notion that the mechanical arts were unworthy or undignified should be dismissed. As regards the latter, he argued that the elite, with no need to work for a living, had a duty to take up useful work in public life. “The publick has this claim on them; the divine providence calls them to extend their views of publick good...”²⁵⁰ Hutcheson, like Carmichael, argued that the elite had the education and opportunity to participate in government and that if they neglected this call to duty, they were “useless and corrupt members of society, unworthy of that external

²⁴⁷ 1972: 168/169.

²⁴⁸ 1989a: 162.

²⁴⁹ Since industry was a benefit to society, Hutcheson, like Carmichael, opposed activities such as gambling which took money from honest producers. “Private lotteries, wagering, and contracts of gaming, produce no good to the publick, nor avert any evils. Some citizens are enriched by the loss of others, in a way wholly useless to the publick.” (Ibid.: 438)

²⁵⁰ Ibid.: 477.

deference they expect: and indeed 'tis only outward ceremony and baser flattery they receive; for they must be inwardly despised by all wise men."²⁵¹

One duty, Hutcheson argued, that transcended economic status was that of national defence. Like Ferguson later, he argued for a popular militia. The youth of all orders, where there was more than one son in the family, should do military service. The government should train men to defend their nation; these men should serve a limited term and then be returned to civilian life. With this the nation would have a stock of veterans at home ready in case of emergency. "Such reputable virtuous citizens ... would have greater courage and fidelity than mercenaries for life, domestick or foreign..."²⁵² This might inconvenience industry while being established but once settled would be beneficial to it. Military service taught men new skills and those returning to civilian life would do their jobs with new vigour and enjoyment. Military service also inculcated a work ethic and habituated men to labour and, when not called on to fight, they could perform public services such as constructing roads and harbours and fortifying cities. Hence, military service would be of practical benefit to the individual and society and would also function as a political statement: "Having recourse to arms is a declaration that we will assert our rights, and give up none of them either absolutely or upon any contingency, as long as we can defend them."²⁵³

While Hutcheson allowed that the lower orders had a place in a popular militia (something Ferguson would disagree with) he did not believe they had a role in public life. The general happiness of society would be more effectively promoted by the arbitration and counsel of wise, unbiased men; through them justice could be prudently administered, the arts cultivated and society protected. But while he did not believe the lower orders had a role in public life he did argue that even the poorest could be virtuous. Carmichael had utilised and characterised Pufendorf's concepts of 'simple' and 'intensive' reputation; Hutcheson would argue along similar lines. Virtue was dependent not on external success but inward temper of soul. Low

²⁵¹ Ibid.: 477/478.

²⁵² Ibid.: 688.

²⁵³ Ibid.: 659.

station or external disadvantage might affect your actions “but neither can hinder the found inward affections of heart, nor a course of action suited to our abilities.”²⁵⁴ Some might court success and public glory, “the more glittering virtues of a prosperous fortune”, but “embracing cheerfully the lot appointed for us, repressing every envious motion” were as virtuous and pleasing to God.²⁵⁵ Indeed, accepting your allotted role, no matter how humble, and contributing to the social good to the best of your abilities was often “more noble and heroick to the *All-Searching Eye...*”²⁵⁶ Performing public functions on the public stage – in this “there is less purity and simplicity discovered, since the alluring views of glory and worldly interest may have had a large share in the affections, or the principal motives to the agent.”²⁵⁷ However small the good one could perform, if your abilities were proportionally small, the degree of virtue was great. It was not only princes, statesmen and officers who were capable of contributing to society but also an honest trader, a prudent advisor, a tender husband or an affectionate father. Such men may not have had opportunities to change the world but:

if we consider, that these were all the good Offices which his Station in the World gave him an opportunity of performing to mankind, we must judge this character really as amiable, as those, whose external Splendour dazzles an injudicious World into an Opinion that they are the *only Heroes in Virtue.*²⁵⁸

Like Carmichael, Hutcheson discussed marriage, sexual relations and gender roles in relation to social duty. He wrote of marriage as a partnership which united individuals and was the only suitable forum for sexual relations. Like Carmichael, he condemned bestiality and homosexuality:

²⁵⁴ Ibid.: 133.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.: 224; 225.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.: 225. Italics in original.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Hutcheson A: 178. Italics in original.

Many instincts of the most useful sort may be monstrously perverted ... either by being turned toward a different species, or the same sex. These indignities to the wise and venerable constitution of our nature, and to God its author, must evidence a brutal stupidity, and an insensibility of what becomes rational beings...²⁵⁹

Hutcheson argued that such behaviour set a bad example. Childrearing would decline and those who did have children would be less involved in raising and educating them. The country would soon be less populous and infested with abject, depraved wretches. At points he seems to have less of a moral and more of a practical objection, for he argued that a populous country was an industrious country and we have already seen the stress he put on industry. He argued that individuals had a duty to the continuation and proper education of their species and, unless involved in important public service inconsistent with domestic cares or too poor, it was “unnatural selfishness to decline our part of the necessary trouble.”²⁶⁰ He argued that the unmarried should be taxed more highly to encourage marriage as it was part of this ‘necessary trouble’, ensuring children were legitimate so that men would help raise them. The correct education of women was also important. It was necessary that from childhood women were educated to be chaste. It was well-known, he argued, that fornication before marriage, besides corrupting women, founded an intimacy with those partners and made it likely that a relationship would continue after marriage. A man could never be sure “in having his own genuine

²⁵⁹ 1989a: 519. Unlike later Scottish thinkers, Carmichael and Hutcheson both expressly condemn bestiality. Bestiality is not discussed by later thinkers, writing in more ‘polite’ times, but it would have been of more immediate importance for earlier thinkers writing in a more rural Scotland. Bestiality was a crime that witch suspects, male and female, were often accused of but such prosecutions were declining drastically by the latter half of the seventeenth-century. P. G. Maxwell-Stuart examined bestiality in his fascinating article, “‘Wild, filthie, execrabil, detestabil, and unnatural sin’: bestiality in early modern Scotland”, pp.82-93 in Betteridge (ed.) 2002. He considered 77 recorded cases between 1570 and 1734 and noted that 37 occurred between 1654-1659. While we should make allowances for possible gaps in surviving records, this concentration still requires comment. During this period Scotland was occupied by England, its traditional institutions (including the Kirk) sidelined or ignored. Accusations of bestiality or witchcraft could be motivated through spite or greed but the great increase in prosecutions signifies major social unease, “and in consequence one must look to a more general sense of moral perturbation within the populace to explain the clustering. A country militarily occupied by a foreign power and subject to assaults upon its national church and legal system, of course, has all the excuse it needs for such agitation.” (Maxwell-Stuart in Betteridge (ed.) 2002: 90) In the early modern period accusations and prosecutions of bestiality, sodomy and witchcraft emerged in times of political and religious tension, when society needed a scapegoat, and the unsettled state of Scotland in the 1650s is a clear example of this.

²⁶⁰ 1989a: 519.

posterity...²⁶¹ He warned women that the consequences of 'loose' behaviour were the loss of reputation and any hope of a respectable condition in life. He warned men of the consequences of their behaviour, as for "a mean sensual gratification" they exposed a woman to infamy and made her unworthy of any conjugal love or trust, "upon which the great satisfaction of her life depends."²⁶² Like Carmichael, he argued for monogamy as there needed to be a unity of interest in children and commitment to the family. If a man had outside sexual interests they could divert him from domestic cares and honest industry for his family. Hutcheson taught that marriage guaranteed men paternity, women protection and furnished the nation with a healthy working force.

Hutcheson had given a very dry portrayal of marriage up to this point, characterising it as a social institution to legitimise children and ensure sexuality was confined to a publicly sanctioned sphere. However, he went on to discuss how marriage should be a relatively equal partnership, not that of male domination of women. This is very surprising, given the time and prevailing attitudes. Hutcheson argued that since marriage required a unity of interest in the family it would be sensible to give women, who dealt with the majority of domestic cares, a voice: a more equal partnership would be a stronger partnership. He noted, like Carmichael, that laws and customs had created a situation with the external right of superiority lying with the husband but, unlike Carmichael, did not approve of the situation:

this shadow of right is no better than those which any insolent conqueror may extort from the vanquished; or any unjust sharper may obtain from some imperfection or iniquity of civil laws; or by the weakness, or ignorance, or inadvertence of one he is contracting with. To take advantage of such laws or forms, without regard to equity and humanity, must be entirely inconsistent with an honest character.²⁶³

²⁶¹ Ibid.: 521.

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ Ibid.: 528.

Giving the husband physical control over the wife was wrong and exercising such control was “tyrannical and unmanly”; giving the husband economic control was unjust, unwise and unnatural.²⁶⁴ Men’s superiority was acquired, not innate, and a wise woman might have rescued the fortunes of many a poor family. Both spouses needed to be responsible for important family affairs. Marriage was an important social institution and needed to be a secure one: an unequal distribution of power could destabilise it. “In other partnerships no such absolute powers are vested in any one of the partners, nor are they claimed on upon any alleged superiority of genius or fortune...”²⁶⁵ Similar arguments about the unfair and socially imposed status of women would be seen in seventeenth and eighteenth century ‘feminist’ works by women writers (examined in the Coda) but it is unexpected to find them in Hutcheson’s work. He extended rights to women – the right to be consulted, to an opinion and to resist private tyranny. Men might have acquired social and economic superiority but this did not entitle them to exploit or abuse women.

Hutcheson’s arguments about women’s rights and roles are related to his discussion of social status and slavery. While his attitudes on women may have been considerably more progressive than his contemporaries, this did not extend to his treatment of the lower orders. We have already seen that he excluded them from public life, banishing them to the economic sphere. He argued that while the ‘nobler’ arts were enjoyable it was necessary for society that a great many individuals were employed in the ‘lower’ arts of manufacturing and service; as a consequence the relation of master and servant evolved, a necessary and useful evolution. He warned against feeling sorry for servants, of assuming all were miserable in a condition his readers would find miserable. There was no excuse to unnecessarily oppress them but a compassionate heart might see miseries that supposed sufferers were insensible to:

²⁶⁴ Ibid.: 529.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

We may easily find, that the lower Rank of Mankind, whose only revenue is their bodily Labour, enjoy as much Cheerfulness, Contentment, Health, Gaiety, in their own way, as any in the highest Station of Life. Both their Minds and Bodies are so fitted to their State.²⁶⁶

However, this was very different from slavery, which he argued strongly against. He cited the example of barbarous nations who held that war captives would be murdered unless bought as slaves and so owed their lives, and their children's lives, to their purchasers. He disagreed:

Captives owe their lives and all to the purchasers, say they. Just in the same manner, we, our nobles, and princes, often owe our lives to mid-wives, chirurgeons, physicians, fellow-soldiers, servants, neighbours: one who was the means of preserving a man's life is not therefore entitled to make him a slave, and sell him as a piece of goods.²⁶⁷

Like Carmichael, he could not allow that a man could become commercial property and argued that no price could be put on human life: "No damage done or crime committed can change a rational creature into a piece of goods void of all right..."²⁶⁸ He linked his discussion of slavery to that of rights and Caroline Robbins argues that most important in this was his endorsement of the right of resistance. Carmichael had argued, as had Buchanan and Knox, that subjects had a right to resist a ruler who exceeded the limits of their power and Hutcheson agreed. He argued that individuals never gave up the right to self-defence and to resist private or public tyranny: "Thus, his doctrines of individual rights connected with his notions of political behaviour. Children could not be bound to forever obey parents. Servants might leave unjust masters, the conquered might demand consideration from the conqueror, and the subjects of the most absolute monarch could not be tied down forever, and in all circumstances, even by oaths and contracts."²⁶⁹

²⁶⁶ 1972: 182/183.

²⁶⁷ 1989a: 449.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.: 566/567.

²⁶⁹ Robbins 1961: 188.

Carmichael and Hutcheson shared many concerns, but one area that Hutcheson was more concerned with was the use of history. He advocated the use of histories that discussed war, sedition, massacres, corruption and court intrigues. Men should read of the great – tempted by avarice, ambition and flattery – not the humble, who led lives of simple, virtuous enjoyment. They should read of “the critical times, the sicknesses of states, the parties, and the factions, and their contentions; revolutions, and foreign wars, and their causes.”²⁷⁰ This might seem to contradict his complaint that moralists dwelt too much on the negative aspects of human nature but, he argued, such dangers, their causes and remedies, needed to be recorded for future generations to learn from: “Thus authors in medicine relate not the agreeable enjoyments and exercises of health. The cases, symptoms, and prognosticks of disorders, their critical turns, and the effect of different medicines applied, are the proper subjects of dissertations.”²⁷¹ Hutcheson argued that historians should report not only what happened but also why it happened. History, by representing the moral characters and fortunes of great individuals and nations, exercised a moral faculty and taught us to empathise with and learn from the mistakes and misfortunes of others. History could be a moral corrective. It could teach us appropriate social and moral behaviour.

3. - Carmichael and Hutcheson compared

That both Carmichael and Hutcheson wrote about political responsibility – about society and sociableness, luxury, duty, ‘simple’ and ‘intensive’ reputation - highlights a continuing Scottish discourse on these areas. Both argued for the primacy of society and of the importance of sociableness; both argued that while luxury could promote commercial interests it could also corrode moral fibre; both stressed the importance of duty and of contributing positively to society. These were key concerns in Scottish Enlightenment social and political writing. However, Carmichael and Hutcheson are not just interesting as early representatives of the

²⁷⁰ 1989a: 196.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

Scottish Enlightenment and their innovative work, particularly on women and slavery, is interesting in its own right.

Carmichael and Hutcheson considered marriage an important social institution that ensured stability and encouraged industry. Both stressed the importance of monogamy for both sexes but they differed in their attitudes to women's rights and roles. Both argued that men had dominion over women but Hutcheson, unlike Carmichael, did not accept that this was inevitable or right. Carmichael treated women as a social good, as something men had a right to. Hutcheson argued that they had (albeit limited) rights and deserved a voice on decisions that affected them. Both argued that respect needed to be earned, not just given because of social or economic status, but only Hutcheson extended this into gender roles. Men dominated women through chance and social custom, not by superior skill, and hence men should behave in a way that entitled them to women's respect and co-operation.

Similar issues of rights were raised in Carmichael and Hutcheson's discussion of slavery. Both condemned it strongly, arguing that nothing a man did, no defeat in war or legal transgression, could turn him from a person into a possession. This was far ahead of its time. There was little public opposition to slavery in the early 1700s and there would be no concerted protest until the late eighteenth century. Britain played an active role in the slave trade from the seventeenth century, and in the eighteenth-century it would dominate with a 'triangular trade' between West Africa, Britain (especially London, Bristol, Liverpool and Glasgow) and North America. Although figures vary, an estimated 25 million individuals were enslaved and transported in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Scots and Scotland benefited from the slave trade, Glasgow in particular. Although many are aware of Glasgow's connection with the tobacco trade, few consider the role of slavery in this, although the tobacco trade was based entirely on slave labour. Carmichael and Hutcheson's opposition was a welcome stance at a time when few others defended the rights of those seen merely as possessions and tools. Future generations of Scots would play an important legal, as well as philosophical, role in the abolition of slavery. *Somerset v. Stewart* 1772 had ruled that black slaves in England could not be

forcibly sold abroad by their masters. This decision established that English courts would not view slavery as an enforceable contractual relationship and was widely perceived as ending slavery in England. Scottish courts dealt with the issue in *Knight v. Wedderburn* 1778. Joseph Knight, an African-born slave, was brought to Scotland by his owner, John Wedderburn, in 1769. He heard about the Somerset case, assumed it included the rest of Britain and demanded wages. When his request was refused he tried to leave Wedderburn's service; Wedderburn had him arrested. The case came before the Sheriff of Perth, who ruled that there could be no slavery in Scotland. Wedderburn appealed and in 1777 the Court of Session in Edinburgh heard the case. The full panel of judges, who included Lord Kames, decided for Knight, declaring on 15/1/1778 that slavery was against the law of Scotland.²⁷² "It was a victory for the notion that man's claim to liberty is universal. What Francis Hutcheson had first asserted in his Glasgow classroom had now been confirmed by Kames and the judges of the Court of Session."²⁷³

Carmichael and Hutcheson challenged accepted social customs and values; they also challenged accepted university and Church customs and values. Carmichael had made radical changes in teaching methods and encouraged his students to think for themselves. It is difficult to reconcile this with his support for the Articles of Faith of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. After the 1689 constitutional settlement a 1690 Act of Parliament was passed which stated that all Principals and Regents of Scottish universities were required to subscribe to an oath of allegiance to the new monarchs and to declare their belief in the Articles of Faith. Those who refused were dismissed. Carmichael argued this subscription in no way inhibited members of the University in their inquiries: "there are certain dogmas concerning the weightier articles of religion, to which assent is demanded of those who are admitted to the task of teaching in our churches or academies. But it is certain that we have not for

²⁷² Henry Home, Lord Kames, 1696-1782, lawyer, agricultural improver and writer.

²⁷³ Herman 2003: 101. Slavery was abolished legislatively in a piecemeal fashion. An 1807 Act of Parliament outlawed the sale or purchase of enslaved Africans in the British Empire. The abolition of slavery as an institution was not achieved until the 1833 Abolition Act (for which a Scot, Henry Brougham, Lord Chancellor from 1830-1834, was responsible). Two measures were introduced to mollify slave owners: a five-year apprenticeship system and financial compensation. The British government would, in effect, buy the slaves' freedom. In total, an estimated £20 million was paid to owners for their inconvenience. Sadly, few thought the slaves themselves deserved compensation.

this reason ever encountered any barrier to the progress of learning...”²⁷⁴ Hutcheson might have disagreed. He too made radical changes in teaching methods – for example, he lectured in English not Latin - but although extremely popular with students and colleagues, he was not popular with the orthodox who disapproved of his liberal theological tendencies. Hutcheson was prominent among those trying to liberalise the Church, seeking to move away from Knox’s hard dogmas and make Presbyterianism a humane and comforting faith. He was instrumental in establishing the ‘Moderates’, a group within the Kirk who believed it should play a positive role in society, inspiring joy not fear.²⁷⁵ In 1738 he was prosecuted, unsuccessfully, by the Glasgow Presbytery for alleged deviations from the Westminster Confession.²⁷⁶ In the 1730s Hutcheson was arguing that men could be naturally virtuous, that pagans could be good despite not being Christians and that morality was antecedent to God’s commands. Although he believed in God he thought there was no need to turn to the Bible to explain why it was wrong to be unfaithful, steal or kill. His theology has been described as ‘optimistic deism’ and though this might not seem controversial to modern readers it was in Hutcheson’s time. However, the failure of this prosecution and the relatively tolerant treatment of David Hume demonstrates the more liberal atmosphere Carmichael and Hutcheson’s teaching had helped create. Although Hume had a reputation as a moral sceptic and atheist, the worst that happened was his rejection for the posts of Professor of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh in 1746 and of Rhetoric at Glasgow in 1752. He was not censured or politically persecuted.

Carmichael and Hutcheson may have argued that they were not constrained by religious structures but one can see a political influence on their work. Both were vigorous supporters of the ‘Glorious Revolution’, Whiggism and the Hanoverian

²⁷⁴ Carmichael B: 15.

²⁷⁵ This group included men such as Hugh Blair, Alexander Carlyle, William Robertson and William Leechman. Leechman, who had attended Hutcheson’s lectures in the 1730s, was elected Professor of Divinity at the University of Glasgow in 1743 with Hutcheson’s support and was charged with heresy almost immediately. The Glasgow Presbytery refused to accept him, charging that his 1743 *On the Nature, Reasonableness, and Advantage of Prayer* was heretical. Leechman and his supporters did not take the charge very seriously, seeing it as “but one more attack of the ill-educated and feverish presbytery upon those of more moderate tastes and dispositions.” (Kennedy, ‘William Leechman, Pulpit Eloquence and the Glasgow Enlightenment’, pp.56-72 in Hook and Sher (eds.) 1995: 57/58)

²⁷⁶ This document, ratified in 1647 and to which all Ministers of the Kirk were obliged to subscribe, declared that all human nature was fundamentally flawed and inclined to evil.

succession. Carmichael praised the Hanoverians lavishly, writing that the British nation, after excluding all those “who surrendered themselves to the Roman Pontificate”, conferred the succession:

on that most illustrious family, pointed out by the finger of Heaven to save them from destruction, a family which has given us the most Serene King George, today happily ruling over us, and which will continue to afford a line of pious Kings, who will endure, if *Britain's* prayers prevail, as long as the sun and the moon.²⁷⁷

I would argue that we can extend Carmichael and Hutcheson's arguments on sexual behaviour – that homosexuality and sexual interests outside marriage contributed to the breakdown of family life and social instability – to political life. Just as a husband and father needed to be devoted to his family, so a king needed to be devoted to his people. Praise for the Hanoverians entailed criticism of the Stuarts and there was implicit criticism of James VI/I's devotion to his people in their discussion of sexual morality. Carmichael and Hutcheson could argue that James' outside sexual interests – his relationships with men – distracted him from ‘family’ business. As James had argued, he was husband and father to his country and so he should concentrate on its needs, not his. Danielle Clarke writes of the use of sodomy as a rhetorical tool, “as an exemplar to demonstrate the necessity of virtue in government, and of the need to maintain proper boundaries between the body natural and the body politic.”²⁷⁸ This attitude is reflected in Carmichael and Hutcheson's work. ‘Deviant’ sexual behaviour displayed a lack of concern for the opinion of others and a lack of sociableness and posed a threat to an ordered society.

Although Carmichael and Hutcheson are interesting in their own right, they are also part of a continuing debate on social, political and economic change. Both emphasised the necessity of sociableness, the effect of unchecked luxury and the importance of a sense of public duty. These concerns would become increasingly prevalent as the eighteenth-century progressed. Commercial advances, the development of the division of labour and the increase of manufacturing, it was

²⁷⁷ Carmichael B: 187. Italics in original.

²⁷⁸ Clarke in Betteridge (ed.) 2002: 61.

argued, posed a danger to sociableness and community values and threatened to create an atomised, individualistic society. Related to this was a concern that public duties were increasingly neglected as civic virtue was eroded by an increasingly commercial society. Carmichael and Hutcheson's concerns would become central to the Scottish Enlightenment, as its thinkers sought to negotiate a path through commercial and economic advances, social change, political instability and bureaucratic reform. Robbins noted it was rare to find a Scottish teacher, preacher or controversialist who was not concerned with political and economic problems. This concern was directed not only at the growth of societies but also with the effects of rapid growth and commercial advances on both the elite and lower orders. Fletcher was "immensely interested in the poor and hungry"; Carmichael and Hutcheson "were sympathetic with the 'dregs of society' at a time when almost none of the English devoted a page to their plight."²⁷⁹ These concerns would be reflected and developed in Ferguson and Smith's work, demonstrating the continuing debate amongst Scottish thinkers on political responsibility. For example, aspects of Hutcheson's writing on duty would be seen again in Ferguson and Smith's work. Hutcheson and Ferguson shared a belief in the necessity for a popular militia, although they had different qualifications for entry. They also shared a belief that the lower orders should be excluded from public life. However, Hutcheson shared with Smith the view that anyone could be virtuous in commercial society by playing an economic role and being a good man, that virtue and public service did not only consist in government work. The same criticism could be levelled at both, that they justified the exclusion of the lower orders from public life by arguing that they could find satisfaction in other ways. Ferguson and Smith's work will be the focus of Part Two, Chapters 4 and 5.

²⁷⁹ Robbins 1961: 178.

Chapter Four: Adam Ferguson

Adam Ferguson was an important and influential member of the Scottish Enlightenment.²⁸⁰ He was regarded with respect (and affection) by contemporaries, both for his teaching and writing, and was widely read in Continental Europe. For example, he was read by the German Enlightenment – including Hegel, Herder and Schiller – and widely translated into German. His 1767 *Essay on the History of Civil Society* was published in German as soon as 1768.²⁸¹ Some commentators have regarded him less favourably than Smith and Hume, although this is disputable.²⁸² What is more important is understanding the specific character of his views. Ferguson's contribution to the social and political thought of the Scottish Enlightenment social is often misinterpreted. His large body of work is often ignored, with concentration on just one text, his 1767 *Essay*.²⁸³ Further, this text is

²⁸⁰ Adam Ferguson, 1723-1816. Born in Perthshire, on the line between the Lowlands and Highlands, he spoke Gaelic, one of the few Scottish Enlightenment figures to do so. He studied at the University of St Andrews and then at the University of Edinburgh. In 1745 he joined the 43rd (renumbered 42nd in 1749) Regiment of Highlanders, the Black Watch, as a Deputy Chaplain. He rose to the position of Principal Chaplain in April 1746, serving until 1754. In 1759 he was appointed to the Chair of Natural Philosophy at the University of Edinburgh, moving in 1764 to the Chair of Pneumatics and Moral Philosophy. Although he retired from teaching in 1785 he continued to write. He was elected an external member of the Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences and Arts in September 1793, the first Scot or Briton to receive this honour for at least twenty years.

²⁸¹ For more on Ferguson and his German reception see Klemme, 'Introduction', pp.v-x in Klemme (ed.) 2000c.

²⁸² Caroline Robbins is less than flattering about his abilities, commenting that although he mixed with Hume, Robertson and Smith his talent did not match theirs: "He was the least gifted among them..." (1961: 199) As regards Robbins' assertion, Ferguson may not have been as brilliant as Hume or Smith but few were or are, as even Robbins allows: "Such intellectual giants as Smith and Hume may be regarded as exceptional in any period." (Ibid.: 380) Alexander Carlyle, a friend and contemporary of Ferguson's, wrote: "David Hume said Ferguson had more genius than any of them, as he had made himself so much master of a difficult science—viz., Natural Philosophy, which he had never studied but when at college—in three months, so as to be able to teach it." (MDCCCLX: 283) Scott's epitaph – inscribed on a monument raised to Ferguson in the grounds of the old Cathedral in St Andrews – read: "Unseduced by the temptations of pleasure, power, or ambition, he employed the interval betwixt his cradle and the grave with unostentatious and steady perseverance in acquiring and diffusing knowledge, and in the practice of public and of domestic virtue." (cited in Small 1864: 67) Ferguson himself had wanted a simpler epitaph: 'I have seen the works of God: it is now your turn: do behold them and rejoice.'

²⁸³ His writings include: *A Sermon preached, in the Ersh Language, to His Majesty's First Highland Regiment of Foot, commanded by Lord John Murray, at their Cantonment at Camberwell, on the 18th day of December 1745*, 1745; *Reflections Previous to the Establishment of a Militia*, 1756, which defined the critical issue to be faced before establishing a militia as that of educating the nation to mix a commercial, civic and military spirit; *The Morality of Stage Plays Seriously Considered*, 1757; *The History of the Proceedings in the Case of Margaret, commonly called Peg, only Lawful Sister to John Bull, Esq.*, 1761, which was published anonymously and concerned Scotland's right to a militia; *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, 1767; *Institutes of Moral Philosophy for the use of Students at*

often studied for what went before and what came after, rather than in its own right – Skinner’s ‘mythology of prolepsis’. For example, Buchan refers to the *Essay* as “the essential bridge between Machiavelli and Marx: between an aristocratic dream of civic participation and the Leftist nightmare of an atomised state and ‘alienated’ personality.”²⁸⁴

Ferguson is too often characterised as a primitivist and an anti-commercial theorist, harking back to a simpler, pre-commercial age. Teichgraeber’s inaccurate and simplistic analysis of Ferguson is typical of this approach:

Ferguson’s quarrel with modernity ... his open regret about the passing of martial virtue and competitive conflict in the conduct of the civilized nations of Europe – these were not part of a view of human nature that would sustain confidence in new ideals of cultural sophistication and peaceful economic improvement.²⁸⁵

As regards Teichgraeber’s claim, while Ferguson may have had quarrels with modernity he was not seeking to return to some mythical ‘Golden Age’. Ferguson made an important distinction between civil society and civilisation. The actual conventions that safeguarded property and order – laws and social conventions – were termed ‘civil society’. The order that civil society brought forth was termed ‘civilisation’; for Ferguson, it was only in a state of order that man’s finer aspirations could be fostered and encouraged. Only in a civilised state could economic progress occur and he welcomed the benefits commerce could bring a nation: an increase in population, wealth, strength and safety; a significant rise in the standard of life for men of all ranks; an increase in punctuality, tolerance and enterprise. However, as a profoundly social and political thinker, with a passionate interest in society’s development and decline, a particular concern was the increasing commercialisation

the College of Edinburgh, 1769; *Remarks on a Pamphlet lately Published by Dr. Price, Intituled, Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty, The Principles of Government, and the Justice and policy of the War with America, and co., in a letter from a Gentleman in the country to a member of Parliament*, 1776; *The History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic*, 1783; *Principles of Moral and Political Science: being chiefly a retrospect of Lectures delivered in the College of Edinburgh*, 1792.

²⁸⁴ 2003: 221/222.

²⁸⁵ 1979: 37.

of society and its challenge to traditional values, institutions and structures. This concern led him to question the strength and stability of the modern commercial state growing around him. Teichgraeber, again inaccurately and simplistically, argues that Ferguson was alone in this, that amongst the Scottish Enlightenment “it was only Adam Ferguson who articulated a sustained and profoundly sceptical response to the course his age was set on.”²⁸⁶ But as I have previously argued, Carmichael and Hutcheson had already expressed their concerns about the increasing commercialisation of society and, as will be seen in the following Chapters, many Scottish Enlightenment figures, including Adam Smith, were worried by the societal effects of commercial development. What distinguished Ferguson was the particular character of his reconfiguration of the civic tradition and civic republicanism.²⁸⁷

1. Civic humanism and commercial society

Ferguson has been described as “that most Machiavellian of Scottish thinkers...”²⁸⁸ He was deeply influenced by the civic tradition and classical republicanism but recognised that time had moved on and that the civic tradition, in its Machiavellian shape, was not suitable for a modern commercial state. He believed it was imperative to demonstrate how civic republican ideals could be adapted to suit contemporary circumstances. His work focused on an issue that occupied both him and his contemporaries: were economic strength and a vigorous commercial policy compatible with traditional public virtue? As Fania Oz-Salzberger noted, Ferguson was “arguably the most committed civic thinker of the Scottish Enlightenment ... an outspoken advocate of political participation and republican values, and an opponent

²⁸⁶ Ibid.: 230.

²⁸⁷ The main works used here are: *Reflections Previous to the Establishment of a Militia* (Ferguson 1756); *The Morality of Stage-Plays, seriously considered* (Ferguson 1757); *Principles of Moral and Political Science* (Ferguson 1792 Vol. 1 and Vol. 2); *Essays – Adam Ferguson* (Ferguson 1805); *The History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic* (Ferguson 1825); *Sister Peg* (Ferguson 1982); ‘Of the Separation of Departments, Professions and Tasks resulting from The Progress of Arts and Society’, pp.92-103 in Philip (ed.) 1986 Vol. 2 (Ferguson in Philip (ed.) 1986 Vol. 2); *Institutes of Moral Philosophy* (Ferguson 1994); *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (Ferguson 1995); ‘Of the Separation of Departments, Professions and Tasks Resulting from the Progress of Arts in Society’, pp.141-151 in Amoh (ed.) 1996 (Ferguson in Amoh (ed.) 1996).

²⁸⁸ Davie 1981: 27.

of any theory of legal-constitutional arrangements which dispensed with active citizens.”²⁸⁹ He took Machiavelli and Harrington’s work – with the themes of growth, decay, virtue and corruption – and tried to adjust it to the modern commercial age. For Ferguson, the question was not whether traditional public virtue, martial spirit and commercial policy could be combined, but how. He accepted that in modern society one could not expect to find the wholly selfless public spirit and civic virtue of earlier times. Classical republican virtue belonged to the past but a new form had to be found to suit a commercial society of increasing complexity and confusion. He was thus concerned with the nature and duties of citizenship, the inculcation of virtue in citizens and the maintenance of civic virtue in a commercial state. He argued that the practice of good citizenship was a moral imperative and reminded readers in the *Essay* that being ‘polished’ had nothing to do with being political, that to be civilised involved acting as a citizen. He defined the qualities necessary for a good citizen: virtue - a respect for men’s rights and “esteem of what tends to the good of mankind”; wisdom - the knowledge and choice of what was good; temperance - the power to abstain from mean pleasures on behalf of what was more valuable; fortitude - the power to surmount difficulties and brave dangers for worthy causes.²⁹⁰ He worried that men were losing these qualities and becoming ‘civilised’ at the expense of being civic.

To fully appreciate Ferguson’s concerns we need to understand his belief in the primacy of society. His definition of ‘politics’ is telling: “the discussion of material questions, relating not merely to men as members of society, but to the society itself; in respect to its institutions and forms.”²⁹¹ Men should not be considered as individuals but only in terms of their society: “Mankind are to be taken in groupes, as they have always subsisted.”²⁹² He argued that society was inherent to man, necessary both physically and mentally, and was deeply alarmed by anything that threatened to separate men from society, emphasising their individuality rather than their plurality. Formed for society, man is “excellent in the degree in which he

²⁸⁹ 1995: 1.

²⁹⁰ 1994: 104.

²⁹¹ 1792 Vol. 2: 177.

²⁹² 1995: 10.

possesses the qualities of an associate and a friend. He is excellent, in the degree in which he loves his fellow creatures; he is deficient, in the degree in which he hates them, or is indifferent to their welfare.”²⁹³ Society and socialisation allowed men’s talents and ‘finer feelings’ to flourish:

the experience of society brings every passion of the human mind upon its side. Its triumphs and prosperities, its calamities and distresses, bring a variety and a force of emotion, which can only have a place in the company of our fellow-creatures. It is here that a man is made to forget his weakness, his cares of safety, and his subsistence; and to act from those passions which make him discover his force.²⁹⁴

Society nurtured and strengthened men. Their good qualities were enhanced, their negative qualities diminished and in living with others they became more human. The human character needed stimulation and encouragement to develop and a man alone could not flourish. “Send him to the desert alone, he is plant torn from its roots: the form indeed may remain, but every faculty droops and withers; the human personage and the human character cease to exist.”²⁹⁵ For Ferguson, men should flourish in society but this was not always so in modern commercial society:

It is here indeed, if ever, that a man is sometimes found a detached and solitary being: he has found an object which sets him in competition with his fellow creatures, and he deals with them as he does with his cattle and soil, for the sake of the profits they bring.²⁹⁶

Thus, his concern with society was linked with his doubts about the long-term future of modern commercial states. While commercial development had enabled societies to grow physically, demographically and economically, it also threatened the stability and cohesion of these societies. Ferguson had a very basic definition of commerce: “Commerce, in the earliest period of its existence, consisted in the exchange of a commodity that could be spared for one that was wanted: When most extended by the use of tallies, money, bank paper, and bills of exchange, it is still a

²⁹³ 1792 Vol. 2: 41.

²⁹⁴ 1995: 23.

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.: 24.

barter of what can be spared for what is required in return.”²⁹⁷ For Ferguson, commerce itself was not the danger, but rather its extremes, excesses and concomitant individualistic ethos.

2. The Division of Labour

One of the most dangerous side effects of commercial development was the division of labour.²⁹⁸ Ferguson regarded labour in its simplest, purest form as a source of enjoyment for he believed men enjoyed exercising their talents and testing themselves. Labour could also improve men’s faculties as they assessed situations and strove to better their condition. In its most basic form, labour was “an effort, by which a person may, for his own use, fabricate, procure, or improve any unoccupied and unappropriated subject.”²⁹⁹ Such efforts led to society, as men worked together for their own and others’ goals, with the protection of the law to prevent invasion or appropriation. “Wherever there is a plurality of men, there is also a society; and, in society, there is a distribution of parts, and a co-operation of many, to some common purpose or end.”³⁰⁰ For Ferguson, there was a ‘natural’ division of labour in society, with the economic realm reserved for the lower orders and the political realm for the higher orders. “The distinction of the poor and rich are as necessary in states of considerable extent, as labour and good government. The poor are destined to labour, and the rich, by the advantage of education, independence, and leisure, are qualified for superior stations.”³⁰¹

This social division of labour was not only acceptable but also desirable. However, Ferguson argued, the division of labour in commercial society was very different. This new technical division of labour, as practised in small factories and workshops

²⁹⁷ 1792 Vol. 2: 42.

²⁹⁸ Ferguson usually used the terms ‘the separation of professions and tasks’ or ‘the subdivision of arts and the separation of employments’ but since he was referring to what we would now call the division of labour I will use that term for consistency. It is possible that, since Adam Smith had used the term ‘division of labour’ in his Glasgow lectures, Ferguson was trying to avoid intellectual plagiarism. The issue of plagiarism is discussed in Chapter 5: 6 of this Part.

²⁹⁹ 1792 Vol. 2: 207.

³⁰⁰ 1792 Vol. 1: 21.

³⁰¹ 1825: 85.

where one man performed one task, improved work-related skills, sped up production and enabled massive commercial development. But it also served to diminish mental and social skills. The division of labour had changed from a 'natural' social process to a highly organised and bureaucratised one which, he argued, served to weaken not strengthen society and threatened it in three ways. Firstly, it eroded the intellectual capacities of the workers, the lower orders, to the point where they were incapable of, and unsuited to, political participation of any kind. Secondly, the ethos of the division of labour spread to the 'higher departments' of war and policy, separating soldier and statesman, statesman and citizen. And thirdly, the luxury, ease, distractions and pleasures commerce afforded the elite took them away from the public sphere and hence from a virtuous life.

The division of labour and the lower orders: The lower orders were alienated from society by the division of labour. They became stupid and uncomprehending as the limited tasks they had to perform diminished their intellectual capacity. The division of labour numbed the mind as many manufacturing tasks required minimal intellect as well as effort. "Many mechanical arts, indeed, require no capacity; they succeed best under a total suppression of sentiment and reason; and ignorance is the mother of industry..."³⁰² Workers became cogs in a machine and manufacturing prospered most "where the mind is least consulted, and where the workshop may, without any great effort of imagination, be considered as an engine, the parts of which are men."³⁰³

While at some points Ferguson's concern seems to be for the workers, at others he seems happy to sacrifice them for the greater good. For example, in the former vein he argued that though a man's art was important, "the artist himself is still more."³⁰⁴ He wrote that where the division of labour "is noxious to the genius and character of man it is wisdom to check or restrain."³⁰⁵ If the division of labour "should ever mar the performance or become prejudicial to human nature ... it no doubt ought to be

³⁰² 1995: 174.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Ferguson in Philip (ed.) 1986 Vol. 2: 93.

³⁰⁵ Ibid.: 103.

stopped.”³⁰⁶ He further argued that the happiness of individuals was the great end of civil society, “for in what sense can a public enjoy any good, if its members, considered apart, be unhappy?”³⁰⁷ Yet he also argued that inequality was inevitable in commercial society. Although society was intended for its members’ good, the individual’s interests could be sacrificed: “In every commercial nation, notwithstanding any pretension to equal rights, the exaltation of a few must depress the many.”³⁰⁸ As the member of a community “the individual appears to be no longer made for himself. He must forego his happiness and his freedom, where these interfere with the good of society.”³⁰⁹ Ted Benton argues that Ferguson was mainly concerned with the division of labour’s effect on the poor, “with the degeneracy and narrowness of vision on the part of the labouring classes...”³¹⁰ However, while Ferguson had written that the lower orders, due to the division of labour, had no wider understanding of social, political or economic issues and less and less control over their own lives, his *primary* concern was for the elite. In the end, when it came to the workers’ mental degradation due to their occupations, Ferguson took a pragmatic stand: “All we can say is that the less of this sort there is the better, and that subordination however valuable is too dearly bought by the debasement of any order or class of the people.”³¹¹ He recommended no specific amelioration, merely noting that it was unfortunate and occasionally suggesting that it ought to be limited where possible.

The division of labour and the ‘higher departments’: For Ferguson, the mental degradation of the lower orders was regrettable but more regrettable was the spread of the division of labour to government. The ethos of the division of labour had spread from manufacturing to the wider society and thus “society is made to consist of parts, of which none is animated with the spirit of society itself.”³¹² Society became increasingly departmentalised and bureaucracy set in. The elite were being

³⁰⁶ Ibid.: 93.

³⁰⁷ 1995: 59.

³⁰⁸ Ibid.: 177.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.: 59.

³¹⁰ ‘Adam Ferguson’s critique of the ‘enterprise’ culture’, pp.100-119 in Heelas and Morris (eds.) 1992: 100.

³¹¹ Ferguson in Philip (ed.) 1986 Vol. 2: 94.

³¹² 1995: 207.

excluded from government or forced to choose just one role. His main concern was with the separation of statesman and soldier. A true man, a true citizen, could and should be both. Like Britain, the Romans had made steps to empire; unlike Britain, the Romans, “even in this pitch of greatness, made no distinction between the civil and military departments, nor gave to any citizen an exemption from the public services.”³¹³ This was not the case in Britain where the division of labour, in its forms of departmentalisation and bureaucracy, had divided the civil and military, to the detriment of both individuals and policy. “Let the statesman be happy to own he is no warrior and the warrior to own he is no statesmen. Under these confessions the one is a mere clerk in office; the other a mere prize fighter and bully.”³¹⁴

These were not fitting admissions by a virtuous citizen. Society should be a collective body, with its citizens working in co-operation for common goals, but as departments separated common goals decreased. Just as the lower orders lost the ability to comprehend the wider picture and issues, so those involved in the world of war and politics lost the ability to relate issues as they were forced to concentrate on just one thing. “Where shall we find the talents which are fit to act with men in a collective body, if we break that body into parts, and confine the observation of each to a separate track?”³¹⁵ Ferguson argued that to separate the arts of war and policy was “an attempt to dismember the human character, and to destroy those very arts we mean to improve.”³¹⁶ As citizens were led away from a military role they began to lose the ability to defend what they had gained. He warned that in labouring to acquire wealth, individuals and societies lost the means to defend it:

we read of societies, but do not propose to act with men: we repeat the language of politics, but feel not the spirit of nations: we attend to the formalities of a military discipline, but know not how to employ numbers of men to obtain any purpose by stratagem or force.³¹⁷

³¹³ 1825: 82.

³¹⁴ Ferguson in Philip (ed.) 1986 Vol. 2: 103.

³¹⁵ 1805: 8.

³¹⁶ 1995: 218.

³¹⁷ Ibid.: 34.

Commerce had economically strengthened society but spiritually impoverished it, emaciating the mental muscles that enabled men to fulfil their potential and contribute to society. Ferguson saw withdrawal from public life not as moderation but political laziness. Men should be active citizens and society needed to nurse and encourage civic virtue. Men had more to defend but less opportunity and ability to do so:

self-defence is the business of all: and we have already gone too far, in the opinion that trade and manufacture are the only requisites in our country. In the pursuit of such an idea, we labour to acquire wealth; but neglect the means of defending it.³¹⁸

The division of labour, luxury and corruption: The ethos of the division of labour had spread to politics and denied citizens formal opportunities to participate in the life of the state. However, the elite were also drawn away from the public arena by luxury and ease. The division of labour and commercial advances had created what we might call the first consumer society and the elite were spoilt for choice. Their lives were more comfortable, there were new toys to play with and public duties were increasingly unattractive. For Ferguson, the term luxury was “somewhat ambiguous; it is put for sensuality or excess in what relates to the preservation of animal life; and for the effect of vanity, in what relates to the decoration of rank and fortune.”³¹⁹ Luxury was properly “that accumulation of wealth, and that refinement on the ways of enjoying it, which are the objects of industry, or the fruits of mechanic and commercial arts...”³²⁰ He did not condemn comfort: what he did condemn were the damaging effects of ease and luxury on political personality. He

³¹⁸ 1756: 12.

³¹⁹ 1825: 109.

³²⁰ 1995: 235/236. He argued that luxury, in the form of consumption, could be a social good, in an argument that has elements of Mandeville's ‘private vice, public virtue’ and Smith's ‘invisible hand’. Writing of the wealthy man's spending, he commented: “Different traders live upon the profits of furnishing his cloathing, his table, and his equipage. It is evident how many poor industrious people would starve, if he did not buy the works which they furnish him. The very money he lays out for amusement comes at last into the hands of the poor, and is paid as the price of their labour. A part of it we shall suppose is laid out for the amusements of the Theatre, and the people who receive it there, are so many hands who distribute that money among the industrious poor. Every Player must be cloathed, maintained and lodged: The money which he receives therefor is paid at last to the spinstress, the weaver, the clothier, and other tradesmen who live by furnishing the ordinary necessities of life.” (1757: 25)

was concerned with the effect of money on morality, concerned that in 'polite' society rank and precedence were becoming dependent on wealth and possessions. As had Carmichael and Hutcheson, he argued that the elite set society's moral tone and their conspicuous consumption set a dangerous example to other ranks. A man should be respected for what he did, not for what he had, and hence his concern was not with luxury itself but the corruption that came in its wake. Corruption was "a real weakness, or depravity of the human character..."³²¹

Ferguson used the example of the Roman Republic to demonstrate the corrosive capabilities of luxury. The Roman Empire was "at least the most splendid of any that is known in the history of mankind."³²² But even she had struggled to preserve civic virtue in the face of increasing luxury and, if this great empire had such difficulties, how much worse could it be for the British? Similarities could also be drawn between Rome and Scotland. Ferguson wrote of:

the never-ending dispute which ... took place between the patrons of ancient and modern manners. The admirers of ancient times, being attached to what they received from their ancestors, were disposed to reject every new improvement, and seemed willing to stop the progress of ingenuity itself. The gay, and the fashionable ... liked what was new; were fond of every change, and would ever adopt the latest invention as the model of propriety, elegance, and beauty.³²³

Although he was writing of Rome this is an accurate description of Scotland post '45 (indeed, Ferguson was often accused of being one of those who were willing to impede progress). He went on to write of men "glutted with national prosperity; they thought that they were born to enjoy what their fathers had won, and saw not the use of those austere and arduous virtues by which the state had increased to its present greatness."³²⁴ Luxury, ease, pleasures and distractions were encouraging men to

³²¹ 1995: 236.

³²² 1825: 2. Ferguson had written to Edward Gibbon of his *History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic*, 1783: "I comfort myself that as my trade is the study of human nature, I could not fix on a more interesting corner of it than the end of the Roman Republic." (18/4/1776 in Merolle (ed.) 1995 Vol. 1: 141)

³²³ 1825: 169.

³²⁴ Ibid.: 169/170.

withdraw from the public sphere and thus endangered both. Individuals' moral values were warped and the state weakened.

3. Public spirit and the necessity for a militia

Thus, increasing commercialisation and the division of labour threatened society. The lower orders became ever more stupid and uncomprehending; the elite were denied an opportunity to practise their civic virtue through the departmentalisation of politics; the elite became soft and spoiled through increasing luxury and ease. When Ferguson discussed the effects of the division of labour there was a clear delineation between its effects on the lower and higher orders. When discussing the lower orders he allowed that their comprehension, social skills and understanding were diminished or destroyed but suggested no form of amelioration. David Kettler argues that Ferguson was not always the best of thinkers and that when faced by a difficult problem, such as how to improve the workers' condition, often ducked it. "The simplest way out of such perplexity is to ignore it, and he often did just that."³²⁵ This may be true to an extent but I believe Ferguson ignored the problem largely because he did not care about the workers. The elite, excluded from public life and "every manly occupation", were unhappy and listless, feeling "a dissatisfaction and languor which they cannot explain..."³²⁶ Hutcheson had expressed pity for the elite, that "such poor empty minds have nothing but trifles to pursue..."³²⁷ Ferguson also expressed pity for them, pity that they had to turn to rich food, alcohol, gambling and sport "to fill up the blank of a listless and unprofitable life..."³²⁸ Ferguson argued that the workers degraded by the division of labour deserved our sympathy less than these unfortunate men:

³²⁵ 1965: 285.

³²⁶ 1995: 246.

³²⁷ 1972: 112.

³²⁸ 1995: 246.

We misapply our compassion in pitying the poor; it were much more justly applied to the rich, who become the first victims of the wretched insignificance, into which the members of every corrupted state, by the tendency of their weaknesses, and their vices, are in haste to plunge themselves.³²⁹

Ferguson clearly reserved his pity for the elite. This was because he linked their fate with the nation's. Public safety, state interests, the security of political establishments – these should be a nation's goals and the measure of national spirit was the vigour with which they were pursued. For him, the causes of corruption and the decline of civic virtue were the conditions “that deprive the citizen of occasions to act as the member of a public; that crush his spirit; that debase his sentiments, and disqualify his mind for affairs.”³³⁰ These conditions were the concentration on commerce as the nation's primary good and the establishment of a Standing Army. Riches certainly strengthened a nation but the best resources were virtuous men; however rich, “a nation consisting of degenerate and cowardly men, is weak; a nation consisting of vigorous, public-spirited, and resolute men, is strong.”³³¹ For him, bureaucratic government and a Standing Army, with the inevitable and unavoidable separation of citizen, statesman and soldier, threatened the state's very existence:

By this separation, we in effect deprive a free people of what is necessary to their safety; or we prepare a defence against invasion from abroad, which gives a prospect of usurpation, and threatens the establishment of military government at home.³³²

Ferguson objected to a Standing Army for both ideological and practical reasons. As regards the former, the Standing Army was a symbol of the decline in civic virtue and the increase in effeminacy. Effeminacy, a major concern for him, was men's mental and physical corruption and loss of virtue due to a lack of participation in public life. Men were becoming lazy and effeminate and men who would not fight for their country made it a country barely worth fighting for. As regards the latter, the Standing Army was inefficient and made life cheap. Men who were paid to fight

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Ibid.: 203.

³³¹ Ibid.: 213.

³³² Ibid.: 218.

could never be as committed as those fighting for their homes and families. Generals also sacrificed their soldiers too easily. War was becoming a trade with soldiers' lives as currency; it was amazing to consider how war "may be made a subject of traffic ... how often human blood is, without any national animosity, bought and sold for bills of exchange..."³³³ His solution to these problems, and to the decline in civic virtue, was a Scottish militia.³³⁴

Ferguson believed a militia would serve as both a means of national defence and a school of virtue. A man should be prepared to fight for his country and for love of his fellow man. This was not the case with Standing Armies: "A discipline is invented to inure the soldier to perform, from habit, and from the fear of punishment, those hazardous duties, which the love of the public, or a national spirit, no longer inspire."³³⁵ For the Greeks and Romans the public was everything and the individual nothing; this had been reversed in eighteenth-century European nations, when the state became merely a combination of departments. He lamented that the military life, "so becoming the birth and station of a gentleman", was not courted because there was no money in it.³³⁶ Men were more concerned with gathering possessions than good reputation, more concerned with gee-gaws than glory and were becoming "gross, sordid, void of sentiment and manners..."³³⁷ Those who had been disqualified or disinclined to participate in political life should be re-educated through a militia. Ferguson wrote: "Nothing is supposed more important than Education..."³³⁸ However, he argued, schools did not teach the correct things and he was concerned with the education of the elite, the education intended to inculcate good citizenship, which for him was active martial citizenship. "Virtue is a necessary

³³³ Ibid.: 145.

³³⁴ This support for a militia was not an attack on the British Standing Army itself and Ferguson said that he valued the current forces very highly. The militia would work alongside the army and an armed and trained population would be useful in any occasion, vital if the army and fleet had to be dispatched overseas. For example, he wrote of the possibility of a French invasion, seen as a real threat in the late 1750s, and argued militia advocates should make all possible use of this "to horrify people who think we can be secure without a universal militia." (From a letter to Gilbert Elliot, 14/9/1759 in Merolle (ed.) 1995 Vol. 1: 38) Although Ferguson took part in a series of militia agitations 1756/1762 and 1775/1783 (of which more in Part Three, Chapter 6: 3) my focus here is on his philosophical, rather than practical, contribution.

³³⁵ 1995: 146.

³³⁶ 1756: 8.

³³⁷ Ibid.: 12.

³³⁸ Ferguson in Philip (ed.) 1986 Vol. 2: 101.

constituent of national strength: capacity, and a vigorous understanding, are no less necessary to sustain the fortunes of states. Both are improved by discipline, and by the exercises in which men are engaged.”³³⁹ He did not advocate any form of education for the lower orders, content to allow their capacity and understanding to decline, and deliberately and specifically excluded them from his militia, arguing they would contaminate its spirit.

In his *Reflections* Ferguson laid out his militia plans. He dealt with any possible English objections that the British state would be arming and training potential Scottish rebels by arguing that such an institution would not encourage factions but enable the majority to suppress them. Scots needed to be reacquainted with arms and there should be legislation requiring every family possessing a certain number of acres to arm a man. He did not mention any of the government Acts passed to disarm the Highlands. As regards membership, the aristocracy and gentry would have a role, with rank in the militia bestowing a status equal to the titles of nobility; however, “[t]hey will no doubt naturally accompany one another...”³⁴⁰ There would be no law to compel such men to serve as Ferguson believed their nature would lead them to do so. This is clearly in contradiction with his argument that the militia needed to be established because the rich and privileged elite were increasingly corrupted by luxury and ease and disinclined to public service. Ferguson stressed that the ‘proper’ degree of authority and subordination would be established in the militia, with the structure of command reflecting the existing social hierarchy. Hence the exclusion of the lower orders – although they were the most affected and debilitated by the division of labour, they had no part to play in political life and so no part to play in militia life. Those who were eligible included gentlemen, freeholders and freemen; those excluded were cottagers, day-labourers, labourers, servants and criminals. There would be a gradation of punishments for militiamen who transgressed rules. For example, a man who deserted his post in the face of the enemy was to be dismissed and have his name and offence published, and it would be lawful to strike him without fear of an assault action. However, Ferguson kindly noted, it should not

³³⁹ 1995: 213.

³⁴⁰ 1756: 39.

be lawful to kill him: "Humanity forbids the cruelties he might be met with; it is only intended that his cowardice should give an opinion of shame and degradation."³⁴¹

Such remarks present Ferguson as rather a fanatic and he certainly had a fervent belief in the power of military exertions to raise and ennoble men's finer feelings.³⁴² He praised Scipio's military reforms – such as clearing camps of women and traders, restricting the quantity of baggage, simplifying rations to plain food, and prohibiting the use of bed sheets – and, like Fletcher of Saltoun, thought militia life should be austere. However, he was also pragmatic, stressing that militia duties would only occupy a small amount of time while instilling a high degree of public responsibility. He also stressed that a militia would not hamper commercial growth: since the workers had no part in a militia their contribution would be unaffected; a militia would also ensure the safety of a commercial state by counteracting the corrosive effects of the division of labour. With his plans for a citizen militia he did not call for a revolutionary change in the defence of the nation but for a body he believed would complement the Standing Army, raise public responsibility and safeguard the modern commercial state. Ferguson's concept of politics was affirmative. He did not argue for the creation of a new system of government but for institutions to augment and sustain existing structures. He did not advocate radical change, warning that "walls may be removed or rebuilt in parts successively but; Beware you take not away so much of your supports at once as that the roof may fall in."³⁴³ As Oz-Salzberger argues, Ferguson was a conservative philosopher. His conservatism was based on the opinion that Britain's government and social structure were positive and benefited the country. Like Edmund Burke, he advocated political evolution, not revolution.³⁴⁴ However, in the militia debate he believed that the nation could only gain vigour, not lose stability, and so he was prepared for a political fight.³⁴⁵

³⁴¹ Ibid.: 45.

³⁴² Ferguson wrote of his feelings on observing the Swiss militia: "as they were the only body of men I ever saw under arms on the true principle for which arms should be carried, I felt much secret emotion, and could have shed tears." (From a letter to Alexander Carlyle, 29/4/1775 in Merolle (ed.) 1995 Vol. 1: 123)

³⁴³ 1792 Vol. 2: 497.

³⁴⁴ Edmund Burke, 1729-1797, pamphleteer and politician.

³⁴⁵ An illustration of his conservatism is his attitude to the County Associations. Christopher Wyvill, 1740-1822, cleric and politician, had established the Yorkshire County Association in 1779. Its aim was to complain about expensive wars and incompetent government and to demand Parliamentary

4. Effeminacy and masculinity

Ferguson argued for a militia not only because it would strengthen the state but also because it would strengthen individuals. Like other Scottish Enlightenment figures, he represented these 'strengths' in either explicitly or implicitly gendered terms. For him, there was an inseparable connection between masculinity and citizenship. Civic humanism stressed that to be fully human one needed to be fully engaged in the polity and that to deny men the chance to participate was to deny them their manhood: "He who cannot defend himself is not a man..."³⁴⁶ The issues of masculinity and effeminacy were central to his work and the removal of the right to self-defence weakened and emasculated men. As Benton comments:

there is an unmistakable masculine – even militarist – cast to Ferguson's concept of the virtuous life. He explicitly distances himself from values sometimes associated with civilisation, such as gentleness, generosity, and leniency towards one's enemies. He contrasts such values with the bold and warlike virtues of the classical civilisations...³⁴⁷

Indeed, Ferguson referred to himself as "a warlike philosopher" and liked to discuss his own military service.³⁴⁸ Men needed to exercise their physical skills, and when he

reform, including annual General Elections and an extra one hundred county MPs. Wyvill's Association was aped by a further twelve counties. Ferguson wrote: "This cloud that is gathering in Yorkshire alarms me more." (From a letter to John MacPherson, 10/1/1780 in Merolle (ed.) 1995 Vol. 1: 233) He believed it could be very serious, disregarding private interest and public order. Wyvill wrote to Ferguson in 1782, sending him the Yorkshire committee's proposal for general Parliamentary reform, doing so because he was inclined, "from the spirit of your writings, to consider you as a sincere and zealous friend to the constitution of our country..." (From a letter to Ferguson, 14/11/1782 in Merolle (ed.) 1995 Vol. 1: 289) Ferguson replied that Wyvill had done him a great deal of honour by sending him the proposal but that he did not endorse it. However, he couched his disagreement in polite witter. "I am very happy that my writings make me be considered as a sincere friend of the constitution: being so little to serve it in practice the least I can do is to pay it all due respects in my speculations. I know nothing so likely to be fatal to it as the weakness and cowardice of those on whom its preservation depends." (From a letter to Wyvill, 2/12/1782 in Merolle (ed.) 1995 Vol. 1: 291/292)

³⁴⁶ Ferguson in Amoh (ed.) 1996: 150.

³⁴⁷ Benton in Heelas and Morris (eds.) 1992: 118.

³⁴⁸ From a letter to John MacPherson, quoted in Kettler 1965: 90. An oft-told tale was of his behaviour during the battle of Fontenoy, 11/5/1745. He was a military Chaplain and therefore not supposed to fight but since he could not bear being outside the fray grabbed a broadsword and ran into battle. His commanding officer cautioned him that this was incompatible with his commission: "Damn my commission, sir!" was supposedly his reply. How true this is is debatable as it is unlikely Ferguson took up his post in time to be at the battle. However, the tale is recounted in several works, including Walter Scott's 1835 *Miscellaneous Prose Works* and John Small's 1864 *Biographical*

discussed the primacy of society he stressed the 'manly', militaristic aspects. It is in society that man finds "his arrows fly swifter than the eagle, and his weapons wound deeper than the paw of the lion, or the tooth of the boar ... courage be the gift of society to man..."³⁴⁹ Ferguson argued that men were disposed to fight:

Man ... is disposed to opposition, and to employ the forces of his nature against an equal antagonist; he loves to bring his reason, his eloquence, his courage, even his bodily strength, to the proof. His sports are frequently an image of war; sweat and blood are freely expended in play; and fractures or death are often made to terminate the pastimes of idleness and festivity. He was not made to live for ever, and even his love of amusement has opened a path that leads to the grave.³⁵⁰

This disposition was not only inherent to men but also necessary for the creation of states. Since men were disposed to fight it was better to have them fight in groups for a common cause rather than against each other. "Without the rivalry of nations, and the practice of war, civil society itself could scarcely have found an object, or a form. Mankind might have traded without any formal convention, but they cannot be safe without a national concern."³⁵¹ Public defence was an arena for men to exercise their intellectual and physical prowess:

To overawe, or intimidate, or, when we cannot persuade with reason, to resist with fortitude, are the occupations which give its most animating exercise, and its greatest triumphs, to a vigorous mind; and he who has never struggled with his fellow-creatures, is a stranger to half the sentiments of mankind.³⁵²

Ferguson contrasts modern man with the virile warriors of earlier days, who sought opportunities to demonstrate their courage. He wrote of Scevola, who "held his arm in the fire, to shake the soul of Porsenna"; of the savage who accustomed himself to pain and torture, "that in the hour of trial he may exult over his enemy"; of "the

Sketch of Adam Ferguson. Henry Cockburn has this version: "Being Chaplain to the Black Watch, he could not be induced even by the positive orders of his commanding officer to remain in his proper place in the rear during an action, but persisted in being engaged in front." (1971: 48/49)

³⁴⁹ 1995: 23.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*: 28.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*

³⁵² *Ibid.*

Mussulman", who "tears his flesh to win the heart of his mistress, and comes in gaiety, streaming with blood, to shew that he deserves her esteem."³⁵³ These were 'real men' who welcomed the chance to defend themselves and display their bravery. Ferguson contrasted them with contemporary men who were more concerned with comfort and safety. He argued for an active, martial citizenship and, in keeping with the civic tradition, denigrated the feminine and effeminate.

For Ferguson effeminacy was men's mental and physical corruption and loss of virtue due to lack of participation in public life. His conception of effeminacy had three interdependent aspects: disregarding public duties; being too concerned with possessions and pleasure; being too concerned with domestic issues. Men could be effeminate in a range of ways. Unlike women, they should "look abroad", take an interest in the world and actively engage in public life.³⁵⁴ Ferguson demonstrated this himself with his desire to play a role in practical politics. He did not want to merely observe, but, as Kettler notes, "he wanted to play an active part in shaping his world."³⁵⁵ Ferguson argued that in order to enhance their intellectual capacity, and thus truly fulfil their potential, men needed an honourable pursuit. Society should be the arena for this pursuit but in modern commercial society men had begun to deviate from this ideal. Being unable or unwilling to serve their country, they had become "effeminate, mercenary, and sensual..."³⁵⁶ With no worthy objects to pursue, they began to care about unimportant things: "men, being relieved from the pressure of great occasions, bestow their attention on trifles ... and accumulate the anxieties, of a sickly fancy, and enfeebled mind."³⁵⁷ These pitiful wretches were mocked even by women:

³⁵³ Ibid.: 50.

³⁵⁴ Ibid.: 45.

³⁵⁵ 1965: 83. For example, he was sent by Lord North to America in 1778 as part of the commission to negotiate with the rebelling colonists. Ferguson had considered the colonists' 'natural rights' and their defender, Dr Richard Price, in his 1776 *Remarks* but his 1778 contribution was minimal as George Washington refused him a passport through the colonists' lines.

³⁵⁶ 1995: 237.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.: 242.

The men of this country, says one lady, should learn to sow and to knit; it would hinder their time from being a burden to themselves, and to other people. That is true, says another; for my part, though I never look abroad, I tremble at the prospect of bad weather; for then the gentlemen come mopping to us for entertainment; and the sight of a husband in distress, is but a melancholy spectacle.³⁵⁸

Men should not need to be entertained by women. Men should not be concerned with trifles but with the national interest. Ferguson lamented, as had Carmichael and Hutcheson, that men were more respected for what they had than for what they did. They should be esteemed for what they did to serve the state, not for their fine clothes and toys. Women were esteemed for these and men should not ape them. He lamented that in modern commercial society men “transferred the idea of perfection from the character to the equipage.”³⁵⁹

Good citizens needed generous and animated characters but Ferguson doubted such characters were to be found in an increasingly commercialised society. He compared the modern state with Sparta and Rome and the comparison was not flattering. Sparta had made virtue an object of state; Rome had sought to prevent effeminacy at all points. For example, Roman authorities had rejected a proposal to erect a theatre to accommodate spectators during public shows as “an attempt to corrupt the manners of the people.”³⁶⁰ This was not because theatre was corrupting; rather, it was thought “an act of effeminacy ... for the Roman people to be seated...”³⁶¹ Ferguson argued that though this might seem petty, “it is undoubtedly wise, in the matters of small moment, however innocent, to forbid what is considered as an evil, and, in remitting established severities, to let the opinion of innocence at least precede the indulgence.”³⁶² Modern commercial society had gone too far in encouraging comfort over commitment, pleasure over public duty. “We live in societies, where men must be rich, in order to be great; where pleasure itself is often pursued from vanity...”³⁶³ An excess of luxury could warp a man’s character and morals and make him

³⁵⁸ Ibid.: 45.

³⁵⁹ Ibid.: 239.

³⁶⁰ 1825: 81.

³⁶¹ Ibid.

³⁶² Ibid.

³⁶³ 1995: 155.

effeminate but a strong state needed strong citizens, not effeminate wretches. Carmichael had written of 'double obligation' – the obligation between citizens and the obligation between rulers and ruled. Part of the latter was that rulers would do all they could to promote the state's interests. Ferguson argued that one way to do this was to establish and maintain virtuous institutions, such as a militia, to educate citizens and inculcate virtue. How could citizens be virtuous and serve the state, and thus be men, if the state denied them the opportunity? Ferguson questioned if civic virtue could be found in modern commercial states:

Is it found in the nurseries of affectation, pertness, and vanity, from which fashion is propagated, and the genteel is announced? in great and opulent cities, where men vie with each other in equipage, dress, and the reputation of fortune? Is it within the admired precincts of a court, where we may learn to smile without being pleased, to caress without affection, to wound with the secret weapons of envy and jealousy, and to rest our personal importance on circumstances which we cannot always with honour command?³⁶⁴

Integral to Ferguson's discussion of effeminacy was his conception of exclusive, martial citizenship. For Ferguson the citizen was male, educated and free from the necessity to earn a living. He wrote that men's station was highest when "they are bound to no task; because they are left to follow the disposition of the mind, and to take that part in society, to which they are led to by the sentiments of the heart, or by the calls of the public."³⁶⁵ He specifically excluded the lower orders from public life for their lack of comprehension and their concentration on the mundane circumstances of life, such as earning enough to eat. Although he nowhere explicitly stated that women had no role in public life, this was because he did not think it needed to be said. He seldom discussed women but when he did it was to underline their inferiority.³⁶⁶ When discussing (the rare) occasions where women were said to

³⁶⁴ Ibid.: 42.

³⁶⁵ Ibid.: 176.

³⁶⁶ As noted earlier, Ferguson was widely read in Germany. Joachim Heinrich Campe recommended Ferguson's 1769 *Institutes* to young women of the middle rank in his best-selling manual of women's education, *Vaterlicher Rath für meine Tochter*, 1789. He recommended it as being suitable for young women whose 'calling' was marriage and family life, as it would encourage them to know their place. Campe did not believe women should be educated for erudition; rather, he aimed at improving their domestic behaviour.

dominate men, he argued it was through illogical and irrational factors: "The female sex domineers on the frontier of Louisiana, by the double engine of superstition, and of passion."³⁶⁷ More common was the situation in Canada: "They [women] are slaves among the native inhabitants of Canada, and chiefly valued for the toils they endure, and the domestic service they yield."³⁶⁸ When discussing times in history when, it was alleged, women had power over men because they took care of business and property, he argued this was actually a sign of their subjugation. These were concerns that warriors would not choose to be bothered with: "It is a servitude, and a continual toil, where no honours are won; and they whose province it is, are in fact the slaves and helots of their country."³⁶⁹ He went on to speculate that if the practice had continued the establishment of slavery could have been avoided. Women's slavery was natural:

if in this tender, though unequal alliance, the affections of the heart prevent the severities practised on slaves; we have in the custom itself, as perhaps in many other instances, reason to prefer the first suggestion of nature, to many of her after refinements.³⁷⁰

The slavery of men was to be regretted while the slavery of women was merely a natural process. Carmichael and Hutcheson had argued against slavery; Ferguson took a different stance. He argued that slavery was inevitable and necessary in the development of a strong state. If men were to be free to concentrate on politics and war, someone needed to do the dirty jobs. When writing of the Greek and Roman Republics he commented that women and slaves "had been set apart for the purposes of domestic care, or bodily labour; and in the progress of lucrative arts, the latter were bred to mechanical professions..."³⁷¹ This was so that citizens could concentrate on public affairs:

³⁶⁷ 1995: 112.

³⁶⁸ Ibid.: 112/113.

³⁶⁹ Ibid.: 83. Scott has a 'humorous' version of this theory in *The Antiquary*. Oldbuck has no menservants and though this is through economy, he pretends it is for other reasons. "This he disguised, under the pretext that the masculine sex was too noble to be employed in those acts of personal servitude, which, in all early periods of society, were uniformly imposed on the female." (1995: 44) Phillips makes a similar point: "When we hear something described as 'women's work' we can be sure this means good enough for women and not good for men." (1983: 9)

³⁷⁰ 1995: 83.

³⁷¹ Ibid.: 176.

In this manner, the honours of one half of the species were sacrificed to those of the other; as stones from the same quarry are buried in the foundation, to sustain the blocks which happen to be hewn for the superior parts of the pile. In the midst of our encomiums bestowed on the Greeks and the Romans, we are, by this circumstance, made to remember, that no human institution is perfect.³⁷²

5. Slavery, women and the lower orders

There are clear parallels between Ferguson's arguments on slavery and on the division of labour. Both were essential in building a strong state; both freed up the privileged elite to concentrate on public affairs; both inevitably degraded those involved. Ferguson commented on the effect both had but did not argue for their abolition or suggest any amelioration, merely noting that it was unfortunate.

Ferguson clearly believed that women had no role in public life. He also excluded the lower orders. The elite were effeminate in that they were disinclined to take part in public life, too concerned with possessions and pleasure. The lower orders too were effeminate, in that they were too concerned with domestic issues and bodily needs to be able to contribute to public life. As I. M. Young reminds us: "It is important to recall that the universality of citizenship conceived as generality operated to exclude not only women, but other groups as well."³⁷³ Since the idea of citizenship as the same for all translated in practice to require all citizens to be the same, it excluded, amongst others, the poor and wage workers as well as women. As Young notes, the poor and wage workers were to be excluded from citizenship "on the grounds that they were too motivated by need to adopt a general perspective."³⁷⁴ That, of course, was Ferguson's argument. There are other parallels between his treatment of women and the lower orders. Both were ill-educated, if they were educated at all; both served a purpose – making elite men's lives more comfortable – and were, and should be, subordinate to their educated betters; the work of both was

³⁷² Ibid. One of these encomiums, of course, would be Ferguson's own *History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic*.

³⁷³ I. M. Young in Phillips (ed.) 1998: 405.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

essential for the growth of society but largely unappreciated and unrewarded; both were denied any political voice.

Like women, Ferguson's lower orders were unappreciated, excluded, ill-understood and possessed outsider status. They were 'virtual women'. Women have traditionally been excluded from public life because they were deemed incapable of understanding important national issues; Ferguson excluded the lower orders for the same reason. He wrote:

How can he who has confined his views to his own subsistence or preservation, be intrusted with the conduct of nations? Such men, when admitted to deliberate on matters of state, bring to its councils confusion and tumult, or servility and corruption; and seldom suffer it to repose from ruinous factions, or the effects of resolutions ill formed or ill conducted.³⁷⁵

If we replace 'he' and 'such men' with 'she' and 'women' we can see a familiar argument for excluding women from the political process. It was argued that women, with their preoccupation with home and subsistence, could bring nothing useful to public life. They lacked the ability to be disinterested. Again, recent arguments by feminist theorists help to illustrate the situation. Those whom society judges unfit for political life become powerless and voiceless and yet it is societal factors that render them unfit – gender or the degradations of labour. When Catherine MacKinnon discusses Carol Gilligan's theory of women's morality being in a different voice, she presents relevant arguments about powerlessness and voicelessness. She argues that women value care because men have valued them in accordance to the care they gave. Women think in relational terms because their existence was defined in relation to men. Furthermore, she argues that when an individual is powerless they do not just speak differently; they do not speak:

³⁷⁵ 1995: 178.

Your speech is not just differently articulated, it is silenced. Eliminated, gone. You aren't just deprived of a language with which to articulate your distinctiveness, although you are; you are deprived of a life out of which articulation might come. Not being heard is not just a function of lack of recognition, not just that no-one knows how to listen to you, although it is that; it is also silence of the deep kind, the silence of being prevented from having anything to say.³⁷⁶

This is certainly the condition of Ferguson's lower orders. Poorly educated to begin with, they are further degraded by the division of labour and denied any opportunity for education or political participation. Due to their ignorance they are excluded from public life; due to their powerlessness and exclusion from public life they have no means to alter or affect their situation. Ferguson believed it would be unsafe to include the lower orders in public life and so their personal condition becomes a political issue - 'the personal is the political'. Feminist theorists, when writing of 'gender', refer to the social institutionalisation of sexual differentiation. Individuals are judged and apportioned social positions in accordance with who they are, what they do and how others perceive them. There is a public/private dichotomy and fundamental to this, from its theoretical beginnings, has been the sexual division of labour. Men are allotted the public realm; women are relegated to the domestic sphere. Women are regarded by nature as unsuited to the public realm, relegated to reproduction, dependent on men and subordinate within the family. Ferguson's lower orders are regarded by nature (albeit a socially created one) as unsuited to the public realm, relegated to production, dependent on the elite to govern for them and subordinate within the state and civil society. Susan Moller Okin argues that what is meant by 'the personal is the political' is:

what happens in personal life ... is not immune from the dynamic of power, which has typically been seen as a distinguishing feature of the political. And we also mean that neither the realm of domestic, personal life, nor that of non-domestic, economic, and political life can be understood or interpreted in isolation from the other.³⁷⁷

³⁷⁶ 'Difference and Dominance: On Sex Discrimination', pp.295-313 in Phillips (ed.) 1998: 302.

³⁷⁷ 'Gender, the Public and the Private', pp.116-141 in Phillips (ed.) 1998: 124. Italics in original.

This applies to Ferguson's lower orders in that the effects of the division of labour on their lives is not only a very personal issue but also a political one, imbued with a power dynamic. Those who benefit from the lower orders' degradation are those who have the power to ameliorate it. There is a clear disparity between Ferguson's treatment of the elite and the lower orders because he judges both by his standards of masculinity and effeminacy. The effeminate, corrupted elite, whom he wishes to re-educate and reintroduce into public life, are salvageable since they have only acquired the characteristics of women. However, the workers, the virtual women, are to be ignored and excluded since they perform the roles of women.

In conclusion, we have seen how Ferguson's work can be understood as an attempt to reconfigure the civic tradition in a commercial age. He welcomed the benefits that commerce brought and sought to combine economic strength and public virtue. However, he was concerned that manly, active citizenship was declining, thus damaging both the individual and the state. Men needed opportunities to exercise their civic virtue; the state needed a virtuous citizenry. His concept of citizenship was extremely limited, confined to the elite who were educated and free from the burden of labour. It was also martial in character: men would be politically re-educated by a citizen militia.³⁷⁸ As Sher argues, "Ferguson, for all his respect for the new prosperity of the eighteenth century, yearned for the classical ideal of the independent citizen who demonstrates his patriotism and civic virtue by bearing arms."³⁷⁹ His advocacy of a citizen militia was not an attempt to return to pre-commercial times but a way of safeguarding valuable commercial advance while protecting the elite's civic virtue. He stressed that this citizen militia would not interfere with commercial development as the lower orders would be excluded. Ferguson showed no inclination to rescue their moral integrity, preferring to

³⁷⁸ Although Ferguson's main tool for inculcating virtue was the militia, he argued that the theatre should also play a role. It was better for young people to spend time at the theatre, observing scenes of virtue than to be occupied in "low gaming and riot, where youth have no good example to lead them..." (1757: 17) He continued: "We know that in every nation there must be amusements and public entertainments, and the Stage has always made one in every civilised and polished nation." (Ibid.: 22) This issue is considered in greater depth in Part Three, 'Literary responses to the commercial challenge'.

³⁷⁹ 'Adam Ferguson, Adam Smith and the Problem of National Defence', pp.329-357 in Haakonssen (ed.) 1998: 357.

concentrate on the elite. He was a supporter of the existing social order and hierarchy and his concerns over the division of labour reflected his fears that commercial advances could adversely affect these. His concern was not with the labouring poor; as Kettler argued, “he urged the lower classes to accept the inhuman indifference, the debasing drudgery, and the grinding poverty which falls to their lot as inescapable consequences of their situation.”³⁸⁰ He applied different criteria to different groups and accepted the inequalities of modern commercial society, arguing that while “all men have an equal right to defend themselves, we must not mistake this for an assumption that all men must have equal things to defend...”³⁸¹ But of course Ferguson did not allow the lower orders an equal right to defend themselves: they were the most debased by the division of labour, the most degraded, but were excluded from his militia as they would contaminate its spirit. Ferguson welcomed the increased wealth and strength the labours of the lower orders brought the state but denied them any public role, any public respect and any public support.

Ferguson’s reconfigured civic tradition attempted to accommodate commercial advance but did not argue for any extension of the suffrage. Ferguson’s paternalistic attitude and gender agenda can be represented through the metaphor of the family – the state was the father; the elite were the sons who needed to be educated to go out into the world; the workers, the wives and daughters, those whose task was to make life comfortable for others, to ensure their men were free from distraction. John Millar, a student of Adam Smith’s who was heavily influenced by his teaching, had a different approach to the father/state metaphor: “The interest of those who are governed is the chief circumstance which ought to regulate the powers committed to a father, as well as those committed to a civil magistrate...”³⁸² He argued that men had not only a responsibility for but also to their dependants: a sense of responsibility that, crucially, was missing in Ferguson’s approach. As I will now argue, this sense of responsibility to dependants, to those whose labour enabled your comfortable life, was a central theme in Adam Smith’s work.

³⁸⁰ 1965: 285.

³⁸¹ 1792 Vol. 2: 463.

³⁸² 1806: 138.

Chapter Five: Adam Smith

In contrast to Adam Ferguson, Adam Smith's intellectual contribution has been lavishly praised. At the age of three Smith was kidnapped but safely retrieved by his uncle who was, in Dugald Stewart's words, "the happy instrument of preserving to the world a genius, which was destined, not only to extend the boundaries of science, but to enlighten and reform the commercial policy of Europe."³⁸³ Henry Mackenzie wrote glowingly of Smith, "whose genius and knowledge embraced more objects, and produced greater effects in their discussion, than any other writer in Europe..."³⁸⁴ More recent commentators, such as Robert Nisbet, argue that Smith was vital "in remaking the structure of European society in the nineteenth century."³⁸⁵ Arthur Herman argues: "Americans built their world around the principles of Adam Smith..."³⁸⁶ Along with Hume, Smith is the most famous figure of the Scottish Enlightenment and his works are widely read and widely influential.³⁸⁷

However, although Smith is better remembered than Ferguson his work is also misinterpreted. There is a popular tendency to pigeonhole Scottish Enlightenment thinkers - "the economist Adam Smith ... the philosopher David Hume" - with even Joseph Schumpeter calling Smith "the most famous of all economists", but this is a

³⁸³ Stewart, 'Account of the Life and Writings of Adam Smith, LL.D.', pp.269-351 in Smith 1980: 270. Adam Smith, 1723-1790. He studied at the University of Glasgow and Balliol College, Oxford, returning to Scotland in 1746. In 1751 he was appointed to the Glasgow Chair of Logic and Rhetoric; in 1752 he was appointed to the Glasgow Chair of Moral Philosophy. In 1778 he was appointed a Commissioner of Customs, which took him to Edinburgh.

³⁸⁴ Letter 8, to the Right Honourable W. P---, 17/1/1791 in Mackenzie MDCCXCI: 61.

³⁸⁵ 1973: 81.

³⁸⁶ 2003: 368. Ronald Reagan's aides wore ties with Smith's silhouette on them, "probably the first time in history an economic theorist has been turned into a pin-up boy." (Lubasz, 'Adam Smith and the free market', pp.45-69 in Copely and Sutherland (eds.) 1995: 45) Arnold Schwarzenegger has claimed him as a hero, writing of Smith's influence: "I have often said that the two people who have most profoundly impacted my thinking on economics are Milton Friedman and Adam Smith." What they've taught him is "a lesson that every political leader should never forget: that when the heavy fist of government becomes too overbearing and intrusive, it stifles the unlimited wealth creation process of a free people operating under a free enterprise system." ('If it's heroes you want, look no further than Friedman and Smith', p.24 in *The Daily Telegraph*, 25/9/2003)

³⁸⁷ There are surviving versions of his lectures on jurisprudence and belle lettres. His published works include: *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 1759, which went through six authorised editions in his lifetime; *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, 1776; *Essays on Philosophical Subjects*, 1795.

regrettable tendency.³⁸⁸ The *Wealth* is certainly the most famous economics book ever written but the *Theory* is also a major work in moral philosophy and psychology.³⁸⁹ Smith, along with other Scottish Enlightenment members, had a broad range of concerns including language, astronomy, jurisprudence, politics and philosophy, as well as economics. Teichgraeber argues that Smith's greatest accomplishment was in economics, not political theory; Nisbet writes of "the Scottish moral philosopher Adam Smith..."³⁹⁰ I would disagree with both. Whilst his economics is tremendously important and influential it can not and should not be separated from his other work.³⁹¹ Much has been written on Smith's work from a purely economic perspective and I would agree with Dugald Stewart that "it might be considered perhaps as superfluous to give a particular analysis..."³⁹² I will assess Smith's work in terms of his conception of citizenship and political responsibility.

The perceived 'two Smiths problem' – that there is a breach between the Smith of the *Theory* and that of the *Wealth* – has long been a staple of Smith scholarship. Dugald Stewart was one of the first to comment on it; in the late nineteenth century 'Das Adam Smith Problem' was further articulated by a group of German scholars. Teichgraeber presents three versions – August Oncken's, Wilhelm Paszkowski's and Richard Zeyss'.³⁹³ Oncken compared Smith with Kant and saw in Smith's work a proto-Kantian dualism; Paszkowski saw the *Theory* as a humanistic work of moral theory which dealt with men as they should be, while the *Wealth* was a technical and

³⁸⁸ Bryson 2004: 91; Schumpeter 1954: 181.

³⁸⁹ The *Theory* was indirectly responsible for the *Wealth's* creation. The publication of the *Theory* in 1759 led to Smith's appointment as tutor to the third Duke of Buccleuch in 1763. Smith accompanied the Duke on his Grand Tour from 1764 and the two became friends. On their return to Britain in 1766 the Duke offered Smith enough money to stop teaching and write his next major work. This would be the *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. Some have wondered why Smith did not employ the term 'political economy' in his title. However, Smith was very sensitive to plagiarism (as will be discussed in Section 6 of this Chapter) and Sir James Steuart had used the term in his 1767 *Inquiry into the Principles of Political Economy*.

While the *Wealth* is usually more praised than the *Theory*, Smith's contemporary Alexander Carlyle disagreed: "Smith's fine writing is chiefly displayed in his book on Moral Sentiment, which is the pleasantest and most eloquent book on the subject. His *Wealth of Nations*, from which he was judged to be an inventive genius of the first order, is tedious and full of repetition." (MDCCCLX: 281)

³⁹⁰ 1773: 356.

³⁹¹ The main works used here are: *Lectures on Jurisprudence* ('Report of 1762-3', pp.1-394 in Smith 1982, referred to as Smith A; 'Report dated 1766' pp.395-554 in Smith 1982, referred to as Smith B); *The Wealth of Nations* (Smith 1998); *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (Smith 2000).

³⁹² Stewart in Smith 1980: 308.

³⁹³ In 'Rethinking *Das Adam Smith Problem*', pp.249-264 in Dwyer, Mason and Murdoch (eds.) 1999.

specialised inquiry; Zeyss argued the problem was misconceived and Smith's work too simplistically characterised. I would argue that there is no 'two Smiths problem'. In the *Theory* he wrote of trade and manufacturing and their importance to society; in the *Wealth* he wrote of the importance of society and of the welfare of individuals. I would agree with Eric Hobsbawm: "it is as much an error to abstract classical political economy from the historical sociology to which Smith devoted the third book of his *Wealth of Nations* as it is to separate it from his moral philosophy."³⁹⁴ Smith's works deal with different aspects of society and the human personality but have the same overarching aim – to preserve sociableness in a modern commercial society. I believe the arguments about the 'two Smiths problem' are part of the reason Smith asked his executors Joseph Black and James Hutton to burn his papers and his friends to burn any of his unpublished manuscripts they had – because he did not wish unfinished work to be incorrectly interpreted.

1. Society in a commercial age

Misinterpretation of Smith's work is rife. He has been portrayed as a hardhearted free marketeer, an apologist for unrestricted economic activity, and claimed by the New Right as "the apostle of amoral modern capitalism."³⁹⁵ Buchan presents this last view to argue against it but later contradicts himself by calling the *Wealth* "that great apology for luxury..."³⁹⁶ Nisbet writes of the common perception of Smith as "the uncritical worshipper of business interests and finance..."³⁹⁷ However, Smith's work demonstrates his passionate interest in society and the welfare of all of its members in a modern commercial age. His concern with economics was partly motivated by his concern with its effects on society and its members. This can be seen through his definition of the objectives of political economy:

³⁹⁴ 2002: 130.

³⁹⁵ Buchan 2003: 120.

³⁹⁶ Ibid.: 209.

³⁹⁷ 1973: 356.

first, to provide a plentiful revenue or subsistence for the people, or more properly to enable them to provide such a revenue or subsistence for themselves; and secondly, to supply the state or commonwealth with a revenue sufficient for the publick services. It proposes to enrich both the people and the sovereign.³⁹⁸

Smith was not an uncritical worshipper of business interests; rather, he believed that commerce should serve society. He argued that one crucial way of measuring the riches of nations was in the standard of living of the inhabitants: "The wealth of a state consists in the cheapness of provisions and all other necessities and conveniences of life..."³⁹⁹ The contemporary view of Smith was far more reflective of his position than the gross modern caricature:

The study of human nature in all its branches, more particularly of the political history of mankind, opened a boundless field to his curiosity and ambition; and while it afforded scope to all the various powers of his versatile and comprehensive genius, gratified his ruling passion, of contributing to the happiness and improvement of society.⁴⁰⁰

Smith argued, as had Ferguson, for the primacy of society. Men could only thrive in society and needed and wanted the company of others. They were interdependent, "continually standing in need of the assistance of others..."⁴⁰¹ By working for one's own interests in co-operation with others, everyone benefited. It is here that Smith brought in his concept of the 'invisible hand'. When men worked with others to provide for their own needs, they also helped provide for the needs of others:

They are led by an invisible hand to make nearly the same distribution of the necessities of life which would have been made had the earth been divided into equal portions among all its inhabitants; and thus, without intending it, without knowing it, advance the interest of the society, and afford means to the multiplication of the species.⁴⁰²

³⁹⁸ 1998, Book 4, 'Introduction': 275.

³⁹⁹ Smith A: 83.

⁴⁰⁰ Stewart in Smith 1980: 271.

⁴⁰¹ Smith A: 347.

⁴⁰² 2000, Part 4, Chapter 1: 264/265. Smith was not the first to suggest that self-interest and greed could be beneficial – Mandeville had argued a similar point, that vices could be virtues in their beneficial effect on the economy. However, Smith argued he was following Hutcheson, not Mandeville, commenting that Hutcheson's system of virtue and morality was "undoubtedly, beyond

Thus, self-interest caused us to reach out to others and created a community. Society was also man's guide to correct behaviour: "Bring him into society, and he is immediately provided with the mirror which he wanted before."⁴⁰³ Man naturally sought the approval, friendship and well-being of his peers: "there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it, except the pleasure of seeing it."⁴⁰⁴ Nature, when forming men for society, gave them a desire to please, a desire to be approved of and a desire to be what ought to be approved of. Smith encapsulates this in a wonderful statement: "Man naturally desires, not only to be loved, but to be lovely; or to be that thing which is the natural and proper object of love."⁴⁰⁵ So for him, society was important to man as it shaped and moulded his behaviour and provided a moral compass. Political development followed social development: "government ... grows up with society..."⁴⁰⁶ However, commercial advances were a threat to this moral, social and political development. Although he appreciated the benefits commerce brought, he argued that certain commercial practices adversely affected society's morals and individuals' capabilities. For example, he argued that men were not naturally unequal in the sense that their natural talents defined their place in the social order but rather that their education and occupations shaped them and placed them in the social order: "The difference of employment occasions the difference of genius..."⁴⁰⁷ Integral to his concern about modern commercial society was his consideration of the division of labour.

all comparison, the most acute, the most distinct, the most philosophical, and, what is of the greatest consequence of all, the soberest and most judicious." (Ibid., Part 7, Section 2, Chapter 3: 441) He criticised Mandeville, arguing that his notions were "in every respect erroneous" but popular because of the way they were expressed: "the lively and the humorous, though coarse and rustic eloquence of Dr Mandeville, have thrown upon his doctrines an air of truth and probability which is very apt to impose upon the unskilful." (Ibid., Part 7, Section 2, Chapter 4: 451) Such an argument illustrates how Scottish Enlightenment figures were in discussion with each other and with earlier thinkers.

⁴⁰³ 2000, Part 3, Chapter 1: 162.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid., Part 1, Section 1, Chapter 1: 3.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., Part 3, Chapter 2: 166.

⁴⁰⁶ Smith A: 107.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.: 348.

2. *The Division of Labour*

The division of labour was a concern for many Scottish Enlightenment thinkers – we have already seen Ferguson’s analysis – but, as Ali Rattansi argues, “it was Smith ... who popularised the concept of the division of labour and gave it a theoretical importance and centrality it had never possessed since the decline of the Greek city state.”⁴⁰⁸ For him, it was the natural and necessary consequence of humanity’s “propensity to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another.”⁴⁰⁹ It was also the greatest force behind commercial advance. Three particular factors increased production and hence commercial progress. These were that given a simplified, singular task the worker’s skill at their particular employment grew; that this improved skill led to greater speed of production and significant time-saving; that with his mind so focused on one task, the worker’s invention was stimulated to find more efficient ways of performing this task. “The greatest improvement in the productive powers of labour, and the greater part of the skill, dexterity, and judgement, with which it is any where directed, or applied, seem to have been the effects of the division of labour.”⁴¹⁰ Thus, in relation to commercial life, the division of labour enabled industry and commerce to flourish.

Smith also went into great detail on the effects of the division of labour and the commercial spirit on social and political life. Like Ferguson, he considered the effects on both the elite and the lower orders; unlike Ferguson, his analysis concentrated on the latter. Smith was concerned with the inequality inherent in modern commercial society. He discussed the social division of labour and wrote of its imbalance. There were many who did not work but lived off the effort of others. Out of 10,000 families there might be 100 that were entirely supported by others and whose comfortable life was the product of the hard labour and sacrifice of the lower orders:

⁴⁰⁸ 1982: 16.

⁴⁰⁹ 1998, Book 1, Chapter 2: 21.

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Book 1, Chapter 1: 11.

The labour and time of the poor is in civilized countries sacrificed to the maintaining the rich in ease and luxury. The landlord is maintained in idleness and luxury by the labour of his tenants, who cultivate the land for him as well as for themselves. The moneyd man is supported by his exactions from the industrious merchant and the needy who are obliged to support him in ease by a return for the use of his money.⁴¹¹

For Smith, this unequal balance illustrated the unfairness of commercial society, where “he who, as it were, bears the burthen of society has the fewest advantages.”⁴¹² One of the burdens the lower orders had to bear were the debilitating effects of the division of labour. He discussed three negative consequences: the confinement of workers’ views; the neglect of education; the decline in martial spirit.

The division of labour and the confinement of views: When the division of labour was perfected each worker was left with just one simple task to perform. This narrow perspective meant that their view beyond their own trade was diminished. Since men’s understanding was necessarily formed by their employment, with few or no opportunities to exercise their mental faculties they lost the habit and generally became “as stupid and ignorant as it is possible for a human creature to become.”⁴¹³ They were incapable of taking part in a rational conversation, forming any decent sentiments, understanding even the ordinary duties of private life and of “the great and extensive interests of his country, he is altogether incapable of judging...”⁴¹⁴ The more advanced commercial life was, the more affected the workers were and, therefore, the more their intellectual and social skills deteriorated: “in every commercial nation the low people are exceedingly stupid. The Dutch vulgar are eminently so, and the English are more so than the Scotch.”⁴¹⁵

⁴¹¹ Smith A: 340.

⁴¹² Smith B: 490. In Smith A the argument is phrased more emotively: “Thus he who as it were supports the whole frame of society and furnishes the means of the convenience and ease of all the rest is himself possessed of a very small share and is buried in obscurity. He bears on his shoulders the whole of mankind, and unable to sustain the load is buried by the weight of it and thrust down into the lowest parts of the earth, from whence he supports all the rest.” (Smith A: 341)

⁴¹³ 1998, Book 5, Chapter 1, Part Third, Article 2: 429.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid.

⁴¹⁵ Smith B: 539.

The division of labour and the neglect of education: The division of labour made men ignorant and uncomprehending and this situation was abetted by the neglect of education, the second negative consequence Smith considered. In rich and commercial nations the division of labour had reduced most trades to very simple operations, enabling children as young as five and six to be employed. This meant they had little or no formal education and were, therefore, illiterate. One effect of this was that they were denied the benefit of religion. Religion served two purposes: it encouraged men to be pious and behave well, while also giving them something to think about while at work, keeping their minds occupied. A further disadvantage of putting children to work was that their parents found themselves obliged to them and so lost their authority and control over them. Without this parental authority to guide them, young men could become wild and unruly: "When he is grown up he has no ideas with which he can amuse himself. When he is away from his work he must therefore betake himself to drunkenness and riot."⁴¹⁶ Smith argued that the division of labour diminished and destroyed the abilities and understanding that enabled men to be 'respectable'. With no education, religious instruction or role models they had no sense of political responsibility. This was unfortunate not only for the individual but also for society, which suffered by the lack of a responsible populace.

The division of labour and the decline in martial spirit: A third consequence of commercial advance was that men were made cowardly. Their employment not only diminished their ability to think but also to act. Mentally and physically confined, "[t]he uniformity of his stationary life naturally corrupts the courage of his mind ... It corrupts even the activity of his body, and renders him incapable of exerting his strength with vigour and perseverance, in any other employment than that to which he has been bred."⁴¹⁷ Men became timid and, too busy with their own trade, were disinclined to martial activities and thus war too became a trade. The defence of the country was left to a Standing Army and, amongst the bulk of the people, military courage declined: "By having their minds constantly

⁴¹⁶ Ibid.: 540.

⁴¹⁷ 1998, Book 5, Chapter 1, Part Third, Article 2: 430.

employed on the arts of luxury, they grow effeminate and dastardly.”⁴¹⁸ A man who could or would not defend his country lacked one of most crucial parts of his character and was “as much mutilated and deformed in his mind, as another is in his body, who is either deprived of some of its most essential members, or has lost the use of them.”⁴¹⁹

Thus, the division of labour had a severe impact on the lower orders. A man’s skill at his trade was acquired at the cost of his intellectual, social and martial skills: “all the nobler parts of the human character may be, in a great measure, obliterated and extinguished in the great body of the people.”⁴²⁰ Smith also commented on the effect on the elite, but in far less depth than Ferguson. The division of labour, and the concomitant luxury and ease it allowed, made the elite disinclined to participate in martial and political activities. The rich and privileged had once led armies in defence of their country; now they were too fond of their comfort and safety to fight:

When in the consequence of the improvement of the arts a state has become opulent, it must be reckoned a great hardship to go out to war, whereas among our ancestors it was thought no inconvenience to take to the field ... They were inured to hardships at home, and therefore a champaign appeared in no way dreadfull. But when luxury and opulence encreased the rich would not take to the field...⁴²¹

Ferguson had written of men too corrupted to fight and denied the opportunity to defend their country; Smith wrote of men too selfish and lazy to do so. Ferguson was concerned with the elite’s loss of civic virtue; Smith with the lower orders’ loss of reason. A man who could or would not defend his country was ‘mutilated and deformed’ but a man without the full use of his intellectual faculties was “mutilated and deformed in a still more essential part of the character of human nature.”⁴²²

⁴¹⁸ Smith B: 540.

⁴¹⁹ 1998, Book 5, Chapter 1, Part Third, Article 2: 435.

⁴²⁰ Ibid.: 431.

⁴²¹ Smith B: 411/412.

⁴²² 1998, Book 5, Chapter 1, Part Third, Article 2: 436.

3. Public spirit and the necessity for education

While Ferguson had reserved his pity for the elite forced to eat, drink and play to make up for the loss of their civic virtue, Smith had a very different perspective: “the loss of reason appears, to those who have the least spark of humanity, by far the most dreadful; and they behold that last stage of human wretchedness with deeper commiseration than any other.”⁴²³ He criticised those who, like Ferguson, reserved their pity for the elite and seemed to argue that the rich were more sensitive to pain than the poor:

The traitor who conspires against the life of his monarch, is thought a greater monster than any other murderer. All the innocent blood that was shed in the civil wars, provoked less indignation than the death of Charles I. A stranger to human nature, who saw the indifference of men about the misery of their inferiors, and the regret and indignation which they feel for the misfortunes and sufferings of those above them, would be apt to imagine, that pain must be more agonizing, and the convulsions of death more terrible, to persons of higher rank than to those of meaner stations.⁴²⁴

Ferguson and Smith both argued that the lower orders were debased and degraded by the division of labour and Smith, like Ferguson, argued that this was inevitable: “in every improved and civilized society this is the state into which the labouring poor, that is, the great body of the people, must necessarily fall, unless government takes some pains to prevent it.”⁴²⁵ However, unlike Ferguson, Smith elaborated on what those pains should be and suggested a policy of state-funded schools for the children of the labouring poor. There was implicit criticism of Ferguson’s concentration on the political re-education of the elite in Smith’s argument for state-funded education. He wrote that while the elite had the time and money to be educated the labouring classes had little of either: “The education of the common people requires, perhaps, in a civilized and commercial society, the attention of the publick more than that of

⁴²³ 2000, Part 1, Section 1, Chapter 1: 7/8.

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.*, Part 1, Section 3, Chapter 2: 73.

⁴²⁵ 1998, Book 5, Chapter 1, Part Third, Article 2: 430.

people of some rank and fortune.”⁴²⁶ He argued that, although it was unfeasible to expect the lower orders to acquire the same level of education as the elite, they could be taught the basics – reading, writing and arithmetic – at a young age, before children started work: “For a very small expence the publick can facilitate, can encourage, and can even impose upon almost the whole body of the people, the necessity of acquiring those most essential parts of education.”⁴²⁷ This was to be done by establishing a small school in every parish where the cost of the teacher would be largely underwritten by public funds. He praised the country and parish schools in Scotland which already operated under this system and had taught “almost the whole common people to read, and a very great proportion of them to write and account.”⁴²⁸ Such schools should teach practical subjects, such as elementary geometry and mechanics, which could be applied in later employment and aid in exercising the mind. To ensure this opportunity for education was respected and utilised, the public should award small premiums and badges of distinction to those who excelled. This is a clear example of Smith’s sense of society’s responsibility to those who made their state great and wealthy.

Smith wrote that even were society to gain nothing from ensuring the lower orders received a basic education it was still a worthwhile policy. However, it would benefit significantly: “The expence of the institutions for education and religious instruction, is ... beneficial to the whole society, and may, therefore, without injustice, be defrayed by the general contribution of the whole society.”⁴²⁹ He argued that the more educated the populace were, the less prone they were to public disorder and hence an educated populace would be more decent and orderly. As they felt themselves more respectable, they were more likely to receive respect from their

⁴²⁶ Ibid.: 431. Smith had discussed the education of the elite in the *Theory*. He argued that sending children away to boarding schools hurt the most essential domestic morals and consequently domestic happiness. If parents wished their children to be dutiful, kind and affectionate to their siblings they needed to be educated from home. “Respect for you must always impose a very useful; restraint upon their conduct; and respect for them may frequently impose no useless restraint upon your own. Surely no acquirement which can possibly be derived from what is called a public education can make any sort of compensation for what is certainly almost certainly and necessarily lost by it. Domestic education is the institution of nature – public education the contrivance of man. It is surely unnecessary to say which is likely to be the wisest.” (2000, Part 6, Section 2, Chapter 1: 326)

⁴²⁷ 1998, Book 5, Chapter 1, Part Third, Article 2: 432.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.: 433.

⁴²⁹ Ibid., Book 5, Chapter 1, Part Fourth: 443.

social superiors and, in turn, respect them more. Due to increased understanding the lower orders would be more able to recognise and reject sedition and faction and less likely “to be misled into any wanton or unnecessary opposition to the government.”⁴³⁰ Smith appealed to the elite’s self-interest in his arguments for the education of the lower orders. The money spent by the state educating them bought security and stability as men were encouraged to behave in an appropriate manner:

There is scarce any man ... who by discipline, education, and example, may not be so impressed with a regard to general rules, as to act upon almost every occasion with tolerable decency, and through the whole of his life to avoid any considerable amount of blame.⁴³¹

Smith explicitly rejected Ferguson’s solution for the ills of commercial society, the militia, in the *Wealth*.⁴³² Both noted that the division of labour was carried into the martial world and while for Ferguson this was deplorable, for Smith it was inevitable. Manufacturing was improved when men’s attention was focused; the effective conduct of war too would be improved. He wrote of “the irresistible superiority which a well-regulated standing army has over a militia...”⁴³³ A Standing Army was always better trained and better disciplined than a militia. A Standing Army was more practised in the use of arms; militia men, who had independent lives, were never as intimidated by a superior officer, never “under the same awe in his presence ... [as] those whose whole life and conduct are every day directed by him, and who every day even rise and go to bed ... according to his orders.”⁴³⁴ Demonstrating how Scottish Enlightenment thinkers were reading their contemporaries and engaging with their ideas, he dealt with Ferguson’s civic

⁴³⁰ Ibid., Book 5, Chapter 1, Part Third, Article 2: 436.

⁴³¹ 2000, Part 3, Chapter 5: 230.

⁴³² There are differences between Smith’s view of the militia and Standing Army in the *Lectures*, 1762/3 and 1766, and the *Wealth*, 1776. In the *Lectures* he wrote that Standing Armies were relatively inefficient as there was less incentive for them to fight. The soldiers’ reticence could be overcome, to some degree, by tight military discipline but a disciplined Standing Army in a lax civil society could be a threat to civil freedom. A Standing Army fought because they feared their own officers more than the enemy and even the best Standing Army was more loyal to its leaders than to society at large. A citizen militia, commanded by the nobility and gentry, was preferable. However, I have taken the *Wealth* as a more accurate reflection of his opinions as it was a later work, a polished and completed text updated by Smith.

⁴³³ 1998, Book 5, Chapter 1, Part First: 404/405.

⁴³⁴ Ibid.: 403.

humanist concerns, noting that: "Men of republican principles have been jealous of a standing army as dangerous to liberty."⁴³⁵ However, Smith argued, a Standing Army was not dangerous when, as in Britain, it was properly constituted and under the command of the nobility and the gentry, and hence of "those who have the greatest interest in the support of the civil authority, because they have themselves the greatest share of that authority..."⁴³⁶ The Standing Army encouraged liberty by allowing the executive more scope for toleration. Where a small public disorder was capable of disrupting the state, protest was harshly put down; where a Standing Army protected the state, the authorities could be more flexible. "That degree of liberty which approaches licentiousness can be tolerated only in countries where the sovereign is secured by a well-regulated standing army."⁴³⁷

4. New commercial virtues and citizenship

While Ferguson was concerned with the loss of martial virtue, Smith drew attention to the new commercial virtues. This did not mean he condoned cowardice; indeed, he argued that "no character is more admired than that of the man who faces death with intrepidity ... We esteem the man who supports pain and even torture with manhood and firmness; and we can have little regard for him who sinks under them, and abandons himself to useless outcries and womanish lamentations."⁴³⁸ However, this was not the situation of men in modern commercial society and new times brought new values. The virtues that suited men to commercial society were gentler and calmer: probity, punctuality, sympathy, temperance and moderation. He wrote of the characteristics that promoted the good of individuals and their society:

⁴³⁵ Ibid.: 405.

⁴³⁶ Ibid.

⁴³⁷ Ibid. Ferguson wrote to Smith on the publication of the *Wealth*: "You have provoked, it is true, the Church, the Universities and the Magistrates, against all of whom I am willing to take your part; but you have likewise provoked the militia, and there I must be against you. The gentlemen and peasants of this country do not need the authority of philosophy to make themselves supine and negligent of every resource they might have in themselves..." (18/4/1776 in Mossner and Ross (eds.) 1977: 193/194)

⁴³⁸ 2000, Part 6, Section 3: 358/359.

The prudent, the equitable, the active, resolute, and sober character promises prosperity and satisfaction, both to the person himself and to every one connected with him. The rash, the insolent, the slothful, effeminate, and voluptuous, on the contrary, forebodes ruin to the individual, and misfortune to all who have any thing to do with him.⁴³⁹

Men needed to be aware of their impact on others and to moderate their behaviour.⁴⁴⁰ Ferguson had argued for ‘manly’ behaviour; Smith argued for what would be seen by civic humanists as a more ‘feminine’ consideration of others. Ferguson had written with approval of man’s combative tendencies, of their instinctive desire “[t]o overawe, or intimidate...”⁴⁴¹ Smith was less approving. While in warlike times men needed to be warlike, in civil society men had to learn to be civil: “The man who, to all the soft, the amiable, and the gentle virtues, joins all the great, the awful, and the respectable, must surely be the natural and proper object of our highest love and admiration.”⁴⁴² He thus appreciated the range of virtues necessary to modern commercial society. While Ferguson had argued for an exclusive, martial citizenship, Smith had a broader understanding of the qualities necessary to the citizen.

Smith argued that citizenship involves two principles: the first, “a certain respect and reverence for that constitution or form of government which is actually established”; the second, “an earnest desire to render the condition of our fellow-citizens as safe, respectable, and happy as we can.”⁴⁴³ Ferguson’s active martial citizenship was extremely limited; Smith’s concept of citizenship was far more inclusive. One could act as a citizen by respecting the laws and obeying authority – passive/negative participation – as well as by pursuing the good of society – active/positive participation. This last was an inherent part of citizenship: “he is certainly not a good citizen who does not wish to promote, by every means in his power, the welfare of

⁴³⁹ Ibid., Part 4, Chapter 2: 269.

⁴⁴⁰ For example, he wrote that we could not expect our friends, studies and employment to be as interesting to others as they are to us and so a certain reserve was necessary when we discussed them: “And it is for the want of this reserve, that the one half of mankind make bad company to the other. A philosopher is company to a philosopher only; the member of a club to his own little knot of companions.” (Ibid., Part 1, Section 2, Chapter 2: 43)

⁴⁴¹ 1995: 28.

⁴⁴² 2000, Part 3, Chapter 3: 214.

⁴⁴³ Ibid., Part 6, Section 2, Chapter 2: 339.

the whole society of his fellow-citizens.”⁴⁴⁴ Unlike Ferguson, however, he did not limit this to matters of state. The key phrase was ‘by every means in his power’. Smith recognised that not everyone could be a general or a statesman, arguing instead that responsible citizenship could consist in doing what one could to promote the happiness of others. Citizens could contribute economically and socially as well as politically and martially. Virtue did not have to mean laying down your life and could include being good to your wife. Virtue could consist in sacrifice, no matter what your status. Being a citizen could consist in acting responsibly, working hard and behaving well; being a good citizen could mean being a good friend.

Integral to Smith’s social and economic citizenship was his particular version of Carmichael and Hutcheson’s characterisation of Pufendorf’s ‘simple’ and ‘intensive’ reputation. He wrote that it had become shameful to be poor and that the rich were considered morally, as well as socially, superior. He agreed with Carmichael, Hutcheson and Ferguson that virtue was not synonymous with wealth: what a man did should be more important than what he had. If men were to be respected it should be for their deeds, not their possessions. Wishing other men well was not enough; a good citizen had to act:

He must not be satisfied with indolent benevolence, nor fancy himself the friend of mankind, because in his heart he wishes well to the prosperity of the world. That he may call forth the whole vigour of his soul, and strain every nerve, in order to produce those ends which it is the purpose of his being to advance, Nature has taught him, that neither himself nor mankind can be fully satisfied with his conduct, nor bestow upon it the full measure of applause, unless he has actually produced them.⁴⁴⁵

However, commercial society had warped men’s values. They no longer felt a duty to others and sought respect from the wrong people for the wrong things. Instead of working for the public good and earning respect, they expected it to be awarded instantly because of their status. He wrote of men as happiest when advancing “more gradually to greatness, whom the public destines to every step of his preferment long

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid., Part 2, Section 3, Chapter 3: 154.

before he arrives at it...”⁴⁴⁶ In modern commercial society men thought their value depended on their monetary, not moral, worth:

In the court of princes, in the drawing-rooms of the great, where success and preferment depend, not on the esteem of intelligent and well-informed equals, but upon the fanciful and foolish favour of ignorant, presumptuous, and proud superiors; flattery and falsehood too often prevail over merit and abilities.⁴⁴⁷

It was because men were more disposed to sympathise with joy than with sorrow that men paraded their wealth and not their poverty. The search for riches was not simply to supply the necessities of life but to provide respectability. The elite set an example in society but the lower orders should not try to copy them. They could not distinguish themselves in the same way and should not want to. However, as Henry C. Clark argues in his interpretation of Smith, “the life choices ordinary people make in private are as important to the happiness of the species as its public decisions.”⁴⁴⁸ Their contribution to society might be small but it was still valuable, and the lower orders could distinguish themselves by being patient, honest and fair: “Probity and prudence, generosity and frankness, must characterize his behaviour upon all ordinary occasions...”⁴⁴⁹ The happiness of society was promoted by as simple an act as men being nice to each other: “Kindness is the parent of kindness; and if to be beloved by our brethren be the greatest object of our ambition, the surest way of obtaining it is by our conduct to shew that we really love them.”⁴⁵⁰ This was the manifestation of Smith’s ‘public spirit’, which he defined as prompted by humanity and benevolence. Men should respect the established powers, but where they found abuses should try to moderate them; they should try and conquer prejudices by reason and persuasion, not force. He himself had been acting with public spirit when advocating state-funded education, as the public-spirited man “will not disdain to ameliorate the wrong...”⁴⁵¹ Ferguson, of course, had disdained to do so and thus, by

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid., Part 1, Section 2, Chapter 5: 56.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid., Part 1, Section 3, Chapter 3: 87.

⁴⁴⁸ ‘Women and Humanity in Scottish Enlightenment Thought: The Case of Adam Smith’, pp.383-409 in Haakonssen (ed.) 1998: 407.

⁴⁴⁹ 2000, Part 1, Section 3, Chapter 2: 77.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid., Part 6, Section 2, Chapter 1: 331.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid., Part 6, Section 2, Chapter 2: 342.

Smith's standards, was not a good citizen. He did not 'promote, by every means in his power, the welfare of the whole society of his fellow citizens'. However, by Smith's standards, the labouring man who worked hard, paid his bills and helped his neighbours *was* a good citizen.

5. *Women, slavery and the lower orders*

Henry C. Clark argues: "Smith attributed to commercial society a kind of moderate virtue, less dazzling than that of the saint, the sage or the state-builder, but more useful, because more frequently accessed. This situation made moral agency more accessible to women as well as men."⁴⁵² I would certainly agree with the first point; however, the second is debatable. As with most of his contemporaries, Smith had a gendered notion of virtue and in the *Theory* he was clearly writing to and for men. When discussing virtue he wrote: "Humanity is the virtue of a woman, generosity of a man. The fair sex, who have commonly much more tenderness than ours, have seldom so much generosity."⁴⁵³ Humanity was the 'fellow-feeling' of a spectator which enabled them to grieve for others, resent their injuries and rejoice at their good fortune. It was an easy virtue to access and needed little effort: "The most humane actions require no self-denial, no self-command..."⁴⁵⁴ Generosity, a man's virtue, was far harder: "we are never generous except when in some respect we prefer some other person to ourselves, and sacrifice some great and important interest of our own to an equal interest of a friend or superior."⁴⁵⁵ I would disagree with Smith here. On this definition, women were always more generous than men. They were always expected to prefer another's interest to their own and their interests were generally subsumed by the interests of their men – fathers, husbands and sons. They were educated to be useful to others and Smith commented, without criticism, that women's education was limited for this very reason:

⁴⁵² Clark in Haakonssen (ed.) 1998: 393.

⁴⁵³ 2000, Part 4, Chapter 2: 274.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid.

They are taught what their parents or guardians judge it is necessary for them to learn; and they are taught nothing else. Every part of their education tends evidently to some useful purpose; either to improve the natural attractions of their person, or to form their mind to reserve, to modesty, to chastity, and to oeconomy: to render them both likely to become the mistresses of a family, and to behave properly when they have become such.⁴⁵⁶

For Smith, women should be educated to be pleasing and useful to men. Their education did not encourage them to have opinions and they could not converse with men on an equal level. Women had no interest in the weightier matters and this was reflected in social intercourse: "To talk to a woman as we should a man is improper: it is expected that their company should inspire us with gaiety, more pleasantry, and more attention..."⁴⁵⁷

Despite these attitudes, Smith gave women and their proper treatment far more consideration than Ferguson. Although he did not condemn women's education for limiting their horizons, he had at least allowed that women could display virtue of a kind. He discussed rape and argued that as it was a breach of a woman's liberty and a great injury, it should be punishable by death, and went on to equate rape and forced marriage. Any forced marriage was void and the guilty party liable to capital punishment: "as it is generally the man that compels the woman, the same injury is done to her reputation as in the case of a rape. The death of the injurious person seems here to be the only satisfactory compensation for the injury of the woman."⁴⁵⁸ Although commerce had improved women's situation they were obviously still disadvantaged. An example Smith used were the laws on adultery and divorce, which overwhelmingly favoured men: "in almost all contracts of marriage the husband has a considerable superiority to the wife..."⁴⁵⁹ The reason was simple: "it is men who make the laws with respect to this; they generally will be inclined to curb the women as much as possible and give themselves the more indulgence."⁴⁶⁰

⁴⁵⁶ 1998, Book 5, Chapter 1, Part 3, Article 2: 428.

⁴⁵⁷ 2000, Part 1, Section 2, Chapter 1: 34.

⁴⁵⁸ Smith A: 121.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid.: 147.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid.

Smith considered polygamy, as had Carmichael and Hutcheson, and condemned it for similar reasons: the husband had to spread his attention too thinly between his wives and children; wives became jealous and fought amongst themselves; children needed two parents who were devoted to their well-being; some men were denied wives. But Smith went further and argued that polygamy degraded marriage and put husband and wife in the position of master and slave: "The wives are altogether the slaves of the husband, and are in the same manner bought for a sum of money."⁴⁶¹ When commenting on the supposed tranquillity existing in Turkish, Persian and Mogul seraglios, he argued that "this apparent tranquillity, for it is only apparent, is that which proceeds from severity and hard usage. Rebellious subjects when reduced into order are the most abject and humble of any..."⁴⁶² While Smith did not believe that women were equal to men he did believe that they had rights. Their bodies were as worthy of protection as men's and they could not, and should not, be bought and sold. He considered their ill-treatment at a time when few other male thinkers devoted any serious time to it.

Smith had argued that part of public spirit was attempting to conquer prejudice by reason and persuasion, in contrast to Ferguson's attempts 'to overawe, or intimidate'. This can be seen in his consideration of women and it was also reflected in his treatment of slavery. Carmichael and Hutcheson had condemned slavery, while Ferguson had criticised it but argued it was necessary in the creation of large and powerful states. Smith condemned slavery both past and present. Rome had been a great empire and given its citizens vast amounts of freedom, but this was based on subordination: "The freedom of the free was the cause of the great oppression of the slaves."⁴⁶³ The Romans had robbed certain men of self-determination: their lives and liberty were at the mercy of their master and the proceeds of their labour went to enrich another. "Their lives, their liberty, and property were intirely at the mercy of the caprice and whim of another."⁴⁶⁴ He noted that 'we' (the British) were apt to think that such slavery had been entirely abolished but this was not so. It still existed

⁴⁶¹ Ibid.: 160.

⁴⁶² Ibid.: 152.

⁴⁶³ Ibid.: 182.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid.: 179.

in Russia, the eastern parts of Europe and all over Asia, Africa and America. Even in Scotland, there were 'serfs', colliers and salters, men bound to the mines their fathers and grandfathers had worked, but luckily these were "the only vestiges of slavery which remain amongst us."⁴⁶⁵ He discussed the West Indies, where because there were so many slaves and their masters so afraid of rebellion, they were very harshly treated:

the greatest rigour and severity is consequently exercised upon them ... Any one who appears to make the least disturbance is immediately hanged up; and this not in a common way with a rope, but with an iron collar such as they use for the dogs, in which they will hang 6 or 7 days till they die of hunger.⁴⁶⁶

Men should not be treated like animals. Smith contrasted the cowardice of the masters with the nobility of the slaves. He commented that among the 'savage nations' there was a contempt of torture and death unknown in commercial nations:

There is not a negro from the coast of Africa who does not, in this respect, possess a degree of magnanimity which the soul of his sordid master is too often scarce capable of conceiving. Fortune never exerted more cruelly her empire over mankind than when she subjected those nations of heroes to the refuse of the gaols of Europe, to wretches who possess the virtues neither of the countries which they come from, nor of those which they go to, and whose levity, brutality, and baseness, so justly expose them to the contempt of the vanquished.⁴⁶⁷

There are clear parallels between the positions of women and slaves: men imposed harsh rules on both, fearing their rebellion; both were powerless to affect any change in their situation. Smith thought the abolition of slavery was unlikely as those who could do so were those who profited from it (as was the case with the adultery and divorce laws made by men): "These will never make any laws mitigating their usage; whatever laws are made with regard to slaves are intended to strengthen the authority

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid.: 191.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid.: 183/184.

⁴⁶⁷ 2000, Part 5, Chapter 2: 299/300.

of the masters and reduce the slaves to a more absolute subjection.”⁴⁶⁸ However, as a good citizen he attempted to ameliorate a wrong and persuade slave owners to relinquish their ‘possessions’. As with his arguments on the education of the lower orders, he did not appeal on moral grounds but to their self-interest. He argued that slavery was disadvantageous to the masters for two main reasons: slaves did not work as hard as freemen and they were expensive in comparison to a free tenant. As regards the former, he argued that slaves had little incentive other than intimidation to work, as they did not profit in the least from their labours. They would not be rewarded for the quality of their work and so had no incentive to perform well. As regards the latter, he argued that it was expensive to clothe, feed and house slaves to work your land. It was better to lease land to a tenant who would pay you rent for it and tend it with care and dedication.

Thus, Smith’s work amply demonstrates his concerns with political responsibility: the elite’s responsibility not only for but also to the lower orders. He was concerned with sociableness and society. He, as had Ferguson, recognised the disadvantages of a commercial spirit:

The minds of men are contracted and rendered incapable of elevation, education is despised or at least neglected, and heroic spirit is almost utterly extinguished. To remedy these defects would be an object worthy of serious attention.⁴⁶⁹

Unlike Ferguson, however, he did suggest remedies for these defects. He had a real concern for all the inhabitants of society, arguing that not to consider the welfare of others was a severe defect: “not to wear a serious countenance when they tell us their afflictions, is real and gross inhumanity.”⁴⁷⁰ Smith’s general aim was to encourage a balance in society between polity and economy. Nature had formed men for society and even their selfish instincts were useful, as without a degree of self-centredness individuals lacked ambition, but the sociable instincts were more important. Without

⁴⁶⁸ Smith A: 181.

⁴⁶⁹ Smith B: 541.

⁴⁷⁰ 2000, Part 1, Section 1, Chapter 2: 12.

these life was not only shorter but also less enjoyable. Self-interest and sociableness were interdependent: self-interest had contributed to the creation of society, as men sought the means to improve their lives; sociableness created the norms and morals which ensured group harmony. He argued that it was only through the stimulation of sensibility towards others that the egotistic behaviour inherent in modern commercial society could be counteracted:

And hence it is, that to feel much for others, and little for ourselves, that to restrain our selfish, and to indulge our benevolent, affections, constitutes the perfection of human nature; and can alone produce among mankind that harmony of sentiments and passions...⁴⁷¹

While Ferguson wanted to use a militia to reinvigorate public spirit, Smith advocated concentrating on the capacity for human, sympathetic interaction. He was concerned that rapid economic growth could engender dangerous excesses of self-interest and looked to sympathy as a moral corrective. Slavery was an example of how men had come to see other men as objects, valuable only for the profit they brought. He appealed to men's sympathy when describing the conditions of the slaves; he also appealed to their self-interest. The same was true of his arguments for state-funded education. While the state certainly benefited from the lower order's education Smith had to appeal to its self-interest to fund his education programme. He had argued that harsh adultery and divorce laws were unlikely to be changed while they benefited those who made the laws; the same was true of the conditions of the lower orders. Those who had the power to legislate for education needed to be convinced that it would also improve their situation. And while it is true that Smith sought to ensure continued commercial progress, this was because he felt that all could benefit from the rise in living standards it brought. His concept of citizenship was not democratic in a modern sense, extending suffrage to all regardless of gender or socio-economic factors, but it was inclusive in arguing that all could aspire to be thought of as citizens and that all deserved the protection and help of the state. All those who contributed to making a state rich and great deserved the compassion and care of that state, especially those whose labour in that cause degraded them.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., Part I, Section 1, Chapter 5: 27.

6. *Ferguson, Smith and the Division of Labour*

Ferguson and Smith's differing treatment of consequences of the division of labour and the condition of the lower orders help to illuminate their concepts of political responsibility. There is and has been much debate over who 'owns' the theory of the division of labour within the Scottish Enlightenment, with claims made primarily for Ferguson and Smith. While the question of ownership is not in itself important, the debate around it is, as it illustrates how Ferguson and Smith are often (wrongly) perceived.

John Rae reported that when Ferguson's *Essay* was published Smith accused him of using his ideas without crediting him. Alexander Carlyle gave this version of events: "Smith had been weak enough to accuse him of having borrowed some of his inventions without owning them. This Ferguson denied, but owned he derived many notions from a French author, and that Smith had been there before."⁴⁷² Although the full extent of the dispute between the two men was never disclosed, it was of sufficient importance to cause Smith to break off his friendship with Ferguson, which was not revived until Smith was dying.

Ronald Hamowy, in an extremely thorough discussion of the debate on 'ownership', summarised August Oncken's argument that Ferguson had stolen the theory of the division of labour from Smith into nine points:⁴⁷³

1. The French source had to be Quesnay, the author of *Physiocrats*, or Montesquieu.
2. It was unlikely to be physiocratic, as Ferguson had not mentioned or shown such influence.
3. It was also unlikely to be physiocratic as Smith had only that year come into contact with this school of thought.

⁴⁷² MDCCCLX: 285.

⁴⁷³ 'Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson and the division of labour', pp.249-259 in *Economica*, V. 35, 1968, Nos 137-140, London: The L.S.E. He summarised Oncken's argument from 'Adam Smith und Adam Ferguson', *Zeitschrift für Socialwissenschaft*, Vol. XII, 1909.

4. Ferguson must therefore be referring to Montesquieu.
5. The issue in dispute must be the division of labour, an idea that occurred in both the *Essay* and Smith's work, one felt by Smith to be of sufficient importance to warrant that he be credited.
6. Smith did not cite or credit Ferguson in his discussion of the division of labour in the *Wealth*, even though it was published nine years after the *Essay*.
7. Cannan's research indicated that Smith's lecture notes, circulated and available from booksellers, contained ideas on the division of labour as early as 1763.
8. Montesquieu did not raise the idea of the division of labour.
9. There was 'evidence' that Ferguson had a bad conscience, as the fourth edition of the *Essay*, in 1773, carried a footnote with a blurb for Smith's forthcoming *Wealth*.

This case for Ferguson 'stealing' the division of labour from Smith, as articulated by Oncken, convinced some but, as Hamowy argued, "there seems little reason to suppose that – if in fact, the argument between Smith and Ferguson was over the division of labour – Smith could be considered to have a legitimate complaint."⁴⁷⁴ The division of labour had been discussed by a wide variety of authors and, as Schumpeter argued, no one person could lay claim to "this eternal commonplace of economics..."⁴⁷⁵ Plato, Aristotle and Cicero had discussed particular theorisations of the division of labour; in more recent times, it had been discussed and adapted by a number of authors within and outwith the Scottish Enlightenment, amongst whom were Sir William Petty, Mandeville and Hume.⁴⁷⁶ Smith was familiar with these

⁴⁷⁴ 1968: 251.

⁴⁷⁵ 1954: 56.

⁴⁷⁶ Sir William Petty, 1623-1687. Petty's works include: *Treatise on Taxes*, 1662; *An Essay concerning the Multiplication of Mankind*, 1686; *Political Arithmetick*, 1690; *The Political Anatomy of Ireland*, written c.1672 but published 1691. He coined the term 'political arithmetic', which was defined as the statistics of a state's population, trade, revenue and expenditure. The preface to Petty's *Political Arithmetick* is believed to contain the earliest argument for the importance of quantitative empirical methods in the study of political and economic phenomena. Aspects of his work are echoed in Scottish Enlightenment writing. For example, he argued that about a tenth of the population did not labour and, as Smith would argue, were supported by the labour of others. Those who did not labour owed a duty to the state and the business of this elite was "or ought to be, to Govern, Regulate, and Direct, the Labours, and Actions of others." (1691: 105)

There is a personal connection between Petty and Smith: in 1758/1759 Smith was tutor to Petty's descendant, the Honourable Thomas Petty-Fitzmaurice, 1742-1793. Smith wrote to Petty-Fitzmaurice's father, John Petty, the first Earl of Shelbourne, 1706-1761, of Petty as "your Lordship's

writings and so it is puzzling why he would be so incensed with Ferguson. However, it is known that Smith was particularly sensitive on the issue of plagiarism. In 1755, when he delivered a paper to the Glasgow Economic Society expounding a system of natural liberty, he publicly asserted his claim to the authorship of that system; in 1769, on the publication of William Robertson's *History of the Reign of Charles V*, Smith and/or his friends laid charges of plagiarism, although no evidence survives on what was supposed to have been plagiarised. Hamowy concludes that Smith was not necessarily paranoid but rather "he was peculiarly excitable about the idea of plagiarism – which might easily have led him to find it where none existed."⁴⁷⁷

Hamowy agreed that the disputed issue was the division of labour but disagreed about the date of the dispute. Oncken had argued that the dispute took place in and around 1767, but in the 1770s Ferguson and Smith were still in close correspondence. Ferguson wrote to Smith on the publication of the *Wealth*: "I have been for some time so busy reading you, and recommending and quoting you, to my students, that I have not had leisure to trouble you with letters ... You are sure to reign alone on these subjects, to form the opinions, and I hope govern at least the coming generations."⁴⁷⁸ As late as 1780 both men were active members of a weekly dining club and so any dispute must have occurred after then. Hamowy suggested that any dispute that occurred arose over Ferguson's use of pin manufacturing to illustrate the processes of the division of labour. He used this example, which Smith had already used in the *Wealth*, in his *Principles*, published in 1792 (two years after Smith's death) but begun in 1781. If Smith accused Ferguson of plagiarism and Ferguson responded that he had used the same French source, it seems likely that this source was the *Encyclopedie*.⁴⁷⁹ A 1755 edition described pin manufacturing as having eighteen separate operations, the same number as Smith's lectures. Given this, Hamowy suggested an alternative, more feasible, version of the dispute:

ever honoured ancestor..." (4/4/1759 in Mossner and Ross (eds.) 1977: 32) Smith was recommended to John Petty by his brother, Sir William Petty, 1737-1805, who was also a patron of Dr Richard Price. Price, with whose work Ferguson had engaged in his 1776 *Remarks on a Pamphlet lately Published by Dr. Price...*, was a friend of both Catharine Macaulay and Mary Wollstonecraft, whose works are considered in the Coda.

⁴⁷⁷ 1968: 253.

⁴⁷⁸ 18/4/1776 in Mossner and Ross (eds.) 1977: 193.

⁴⁷⁹ While there is interesting research to be done on this, my focus is on the use of the information rather than the 'original' source.

1. The issue in question was the division of labour.
2. It occurred between 1780, when Ferguson began to write the *Principles*, and 1785, when he left the University of Edinburgh for health reasons.
3. It was caused by the discussion of lecture notes that used an example of the process of the division of labour that Smith had previously used.
4. Smith accused Ferguson of plagiarism.
5. Ferguson responded by claiming the same source or influence as Smith.
6. The source was an *Encyclopedie* article on pin manufacturing.
7. The result was an argument bitter enough to break up a long friendship.

While the claim of plagiarism against Ferguson is unjustifiable, there is no evidence to support the counter-claim that Smith was influenced by Ferguson. This argument was most famously made by Marx, who in both *Capital* and *The Poverty of Philosophy* referred to Ferguson as Smith's teacher. He praised Ferguson's descriptions of the conditions of the working class under the division of labour, arguing that he gave a clear exposition of the situation years before Smith. He portrayed him as the more sympathetic writer, in contrast to Smith who was "a fatalist economist ... in theory as indifferent to the drawbacks of bourgeois production as the bourgeoisie were in practice to the sufferings of the proletariat who helped them to gain wealth."⁴⁸⁰ Hamowy concurred, arguing that Smith offered none of the broader political and sociological implications of the division of labour suggested by Ferguson:

it can ... be legitimately argued that Ferguson, in dealing with the division of labour, can claim priority over Smith in offering, not an economic analysis of the question which was original to neither writer, but rather, an analysis which was to have far reaching consequences in intellectual history by contributing substantially to the sociological groundwork of Marxism.⁴⁸¹

⁴⁸⁰ Marx (n.d.): 138/139.

⁴⁸¹ 1968: 259.

This is clearly based on a misreading of Ferguson, who suggested no possible amelioration for the condition of the lower orders, concentrating instead on the elite, and was far more 'fatalist' than Smith. Smith, in his concern with the debilitating effects of the division of labour, was far closer to Marx than Ferguson. Smith argued for state intervention to improve the lives of the lower orders and as Edwin Cannan argued: "The greatest communist institution of the nineteenth century – State education – was spoken of rather favourably by Adam Smith..."⁴⁸²

Smith and Marx both had an immense interest in, and concern for, society and as Robert L. Heilbroner argued: "their greatness rests on an unflinching confrontation with the human condition as they could best make it out."⁴⁸³ Although there are huge differences between them, there was a shared recognition of the instability and potential for social change and disorder commerce could bring. Marx predicted this would ultimately cause the state and capitalism to implode; Smith, recognising benefits as well as disadvantages, sought to limit the damage. He thought education would bring social responsibility and respectability and thus protect the state from unrest, benefiting the individual and their society. This was not a truly altruistic plan but deserves commendation for not only recognising the drawbacks of commercial advance but also suggesting possible methods of amelioration. I believe that Marx and Hamowy were wrong and that Smith can claim priority over Ferguson in his treatment of the division of labour. Marx's analysis of commerce and capitalism, in the form of the effects of the division of labour on the proletariat, may be avowedly Fergusonian rather than Smithian but it is Smith, with his primary concern for the working man rather than the elite and aristocracy, who is closer to Marx.

Ferguson and Smith's treatment of the lower orders can tell us much about their understanding of political responsibility. There were similarities between them: both saw the dangers of commercial advance; both sought to mitigate its effect; both stressed that their solutions would strengthen the modern commercial state. They agreed on the negative consequences of the division of labour; they suggested, respectively, a militia and state-funded education to counteract its effect; they argued

⁴⁸² 1912: 55.

⁴⁸³ 'Introduction', pp.1-11 in Heilbroner (ed.) 1986: 1.

that these would protect the state from alienated, disinterested or disgruntled men. Although Smith had a broader concept of citizenship, both sought to exclude the lower orders from political life. Ferguson did so by excluding them from his militia, Smith by arguing for education to make them more respectable and hence less tempted to faction and disorder. Both could be criticised for perpetuating social subordination by this exclusion. Ferguson permanently relegated the workers to the economic sphere and reserved active citizenship for the elite; Smith broadened the concept of citizenship to include social and economic activity but did not argue for the extension of political rights. Whether either was a successful reconfiguration of citizenship for a commercial age is an issue I will address in the Conclusion.

Part Three: Literary responses to the commercial challenge

It was not only philosophers who were concerned with political responsibility. Poets, journalists and novelists were also concerned with this issue, as I will demonstrate through a consideration of the work of James Macpherson, Henry Mackenzie and Walter Scott. Political responsibility encompasses several aspects of appropriate social and political behaviour, one of which is the behaviour binding on individuals depending on social and economic status. This can be extended to incorporate the behaviour expected of nations and the consequent political responsibilities accorded to them. This is best demonstrated with reference to Scotland and England post-Union and post '45. The Scots (the lower orders) were seen by the English (the elite) as very much the junior partner in the Union but were agitating for, in the form of a militia, greater involvement in political life (a positive political identity). This was inextricably linked with the creation of a post-Union Scottish identity, in which the predominantly Lowland Scottish Enlightenment sought to justify Scotland's inclusion in the Union and to demonstrate her loyalty and suitability for active political responsibility. This would be seen in both Macpherson and Scott's work, while Mackenzie's was more concerned with individual behaviour. While these writers will be discussed in chronological order, it also seems appropriate to position Mackenzie between Macpherson and Scott since he was involved with the work of both: he supervised and edited the Highland Society's 1804 *Report on Ossian* and helped to promote Scott's novels.

As Devine noted, one of the distinctive features of the Scottish Enlightenment was the depth and range of the creative dynamic. I have used the work of poets, novelists and playwrights to illustrate this. Macpherson's poetry was used by militia agitators as evidence of Scotland's grand martial past and hence her suitability for a militia. The reaction to it illustrates national prejudice and ideas of national political responsibility. The work itself was concerned with concepts central to this Thesis: society and sociableness, luxury and corruption, masculinity and effeminacy. Mackenzie's work is also concerned with these issues. His fiction and journalism had the overarching aim of encouraging political responsibility, particularly sociableness,

in modern commercial society. Scott's work addressed the changing nature of Scottish national identity, moving from a martial past to a commercial present and future. He recognised that as society changed, concepts of appropriate social and political behaviour also had to change.

Chapter Six: James Macpherson and Ossian

James Macpherson is a controversial character in Scottish literary history.⁴⁸⁴ With his Ossianic poems – *Fragments of Ancient Poetry Collected in the Highlands of Scotland and Translated from the Gaelic or Erse Language*, 1760; *Fingal: An Epic Poem*, 1761; *Temora: An Ancient Epic Poem*, 1763; *The Works of Ossian*, 1765 – he created a Highland (and Scottish) past of a romantic, warlike yet chivalrous society, where great battles were fought for honour not land. The Ossianic poems relate the third-century wars and work of Fingal, King of Scotland, through his son Ossian's tales and were purported to be translations of songs and stories passed down by Highland oral tradition.⁴⁸⁵ They were tremendously popular in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, both in Europe and America. However, there is a current perception that Ossian is a fake and that Macpherson wrote, rather than translated, the verses. Hobsbawm writes of “pure historical invention, such as ... the writing of an ancient, and suitably glorious Scottish national epic (like James Macpherson's ‘Ossian’)...”⁴⁸⁶

Henry Mackenzie, who from 1797 supervised and edited the Highland Society's 1804 *Report on Ossian*, gently concluded that much of the poetry was Macpherson's version of existing myths and this seems a fair conclusion.⁴⁸⁷ Buchan refers to

⁴⁸⁴ James Macpherson, 1736-1796. Although Macpherson is mainly remembered because of the Ossianic poems, it was a relatively small part of his life. In 1764 he took up a post as Secretary to the Governor of Florida; in 1766 he returned to Britain, settling in London where he was a pensioned propagandist for Lord North's government; from 1780 he served as an M.P. Macpherson was part of Henry Dundas' circle and helped engineer Scottish domination in the East India Company. He was buried in Westminster Abbey. Works include *The Highlander*, 1758; *History of Great Britain from the Restoration till the Accession of George I*, 1775.

⁴⁸⁵ For ease of reference, I shall refer to them collectively as Ossian. The main works used here will be: *A Dissertation concerning the Antiquity, &c. of the Poems of Ossian the Son of Fingal* (pp.43-52 in Gaskill (ed.) 1996, referred to as Macpherson A); *Temora: A Dissertation* (pp.205-224 in Gaskill (ed.) 1996, referred to as Macpherson B); *Temora* (pp.225-292 in Gaskill (ed.) 1996, referred to as Macpherson C); *Preface* (pp.5-6 in Gaskill (ed.) 1996, referred to as Macpherson D); *Fingal* (pp.53-104 in Gaskill (ed.) 1996, referred to as Macpherson E); *Preface to the First Edition of Fingal, 1761/1763* (pp.35-38 in Gaskill (ed.) 1996, referred to as Macpherson F); *Notes* (pp.415-552 in Gaskill (ed.) 1996, referred to as Macpherson G); *The Battle of Lora: A Poem* (pp.119-123 in Gaskill (ed.) 1996, referred to as Macpherson H); *Fragments of Ancient Poetry* (pp.7-31 in Gaskill (ed.) 1996, referred to as Macpherson I).

⁴⁸⁶ 2002: 357.

⁴⁸⁷ This contrasted with Mackenzie's earlier attitude. In a 1779 *Mirror* he commented that though it was difficult to reconcile some of the sentiments with the supposed age, the poems described a simple state of society and a narrow circle of objects and transactions. There was an absence of abstract ideas

Macpherson as “the first literary Frankenstein” and it seems incontestable that while aspects of the poems were genuine, much was added.⁴⁸⁸ Macpherson himself intimated that Ossian might not have been entirely genuine: “Some people may imagine, that the allusions to the Roman history have been industriously inserted into the poems, to give them the appearance of antiquity.”⁴⁸⁹ Of *Temora*, he commented: “As to the merit of the poem I shall not anticipate the judgement of the public. My impartiality might be suspected, in my accounts of a work, which, in some measure, is become my own.”⁴⁹⁰ There has been speculation over Macpherson’s motives – fame perhaps, or money – and, as Donald E. Meek writes: “All too often he is viewed as the villain of a complex literary hoax...”⁴⁹¹ However, nothing about Ossian is that simple and I would agree with Howard Gaskill’s argument that one of Macpherson’s motives was that he wished “to restore some belated glory to a shattered people, by having its culture recognised by an outside world for whom ‘Highlander’ was synonymous with savage...”⁴⁹²

Although there is a lively debate on the authenticity or otherwise of the poems, that is not my concern. More relevant here is what they, and the reaction to them, can tell us about eighteenth-century Scotland. The poems, and the reaction to them, help illuminate concepts of political responsibility, particularly in relation to the

and modern illusions which made it difficult to assign the poems to any era other than that which Macpherson assigned them to. While there were difficulties on both sides: “if that remarkable refinement of manners seems inconsistent with our notions of an unimproved age, the marks of antiquity with which the poems are stamped, make it very difficult to suppose them a modern composition.” (Mirror No. 13, 9/3/1779 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 1: 89) In conclusion, he argued that “it is not possible for a poetical genius of the one age, to counterfeit and imitate the productions of another.” (Ibid.: 93) The idea might occur but the execution would be impracticable; to get the feel for an age a poet had to live in that age.

⁴⁸⁸ 2003: 145.

⁴⁸⁹ Macpherson A: 47.

⁴⁹⁰ Macpherson B: 215.

⁴⁹¹ ‘The Gaelic Ballads of Scotland: Creativity and Adaption’, pp.19-58 in Gaskill (ed.) 1991: 19.

⁴⁹² ‘Introduction’, pp.1-18 in Gaskill (ed.) 1991: 4. Gaskill argues that Macpherson was not, at least initially, intending to fool readers but to salvage something from Highland culture before it was gone forever: “Where a culture has been subjected to ruthless and unrelenting oppression, the temptation towards creative reconstruction of what has been destroyed (or at least had its decay artificially accelerated) is very strong.” (Ibid.: 13)

Dafydd Moore, in ‘James Macpherson and Adam Ferguson: An Enlightenment Encounter’, pp.5-23 in *Scottish Literary Journal*, Nov. 1997, Vol. 24, No. 2, points out several ironies: that Macpherson only learnt to appreciate the Highland lifestyle after he had left it; that the fruits of commercial advance which were helping to erode that Highland lifestyle paid for Macpherson’s ‘retrieval’ of the poems; that Macpherson went to work as a political fixer – a spin doctor, if you like – for the British state which contributed to the destruction of that lifestyle.

acceptable behaviour of nations. They also help our understanding of eighteenth-century politics and notions of history and identity. The key areas I shall concentrate on are: Ossian as an identity-seeking project; the issue of virtue in a commercial age; the militia issue; national prejudice and 'Scottophobia'. This last will lead us to a consideration of the creation and characterisation of Highland and Scottish identity, by both the Scots and the English.

1. Ossian as an identity-seeking project

The 1750s and 1760s were a disturbed time for Scotland, weakened and emasculated by the '15, '45 and subsequent government action. As Oz-Salzberger argues, Lowland Scots were keen to prove their loyalty to the British state and justify their inclusion as a Union partner. Scotland needed to redefine herself and did so by capitalising on her reputation for intellectual and academic excellence. Scottish universities were among the best in the world and, as I have previously argued, there was a long tradition of independent inquiry in and from Scotland.⁴⁹³ Alongside this, it was felt that there should be literary excellence and so when Macpherson suggested that there was a Scottish epic to be found in the Highlands, national considerations fuelled the interest of prominent Scottish Enlightenment members.⁴⁹⁴ Men such as Hugh Blair, Adam Ferguson, John Home and David Hume were conscious of the absence of a distinguished literary heritage:

⁴⁹³ Smith, perhaps with some bias, argued: "In the present state of Scotch Universities, I do most sincerely look upon them as ... without exception the best seminaries of learning that are to be found any where in Europe." (From a letter to William Cullen, 20/9/1774 in Mossner and Ross (eds.) 1977: 173)

⁴⁹⁴ In 1759 John Home and Alexander Carlyle met Macpherson; they talked of ancient Gaelic poetry and Macpherson presented Home and Carlyle with *The Death of Oscar*. Home and Carlyle showed the poem to Blair, Ferguson and Robertson and it proved popular. Macpherson was asked if he could provide more and answered that there was much more to be found; a subscription was raised to fund his journey through the Highlands to do so.

Hugh Blair, 1718-1800, writer and clergyman. In 1760 he was appointed Professor of Rhetoric at the University of Edinburgh; in 1762 he became the first occupant of the Chair of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres. John Home, 1722-1808, minister and playwright, author of *Douglas*.

Macpherson's enthusiastic talk of a Celtic Homer ... thus seemed to offer a perfect, and timely, boost to the national morale. At the same time, the emphasis on fragmentation seemed to diffuse any threatening Jacobite potential, since the power of the ancient Celts was sufficiently broken to require a Lowland subscription for its recovery, and could thus be purchased for the creation of a new, unified Scottish mythology.⁴⁹⁵

While it attempted to burnish Scotland's literary fame, Ossian did nothing to alarm Unionists and nothing to encourage the Highlands to rise again. It was a safe, neutered Highland cause for Scots to champion. Macpherson, though a native Gaelic speaker of a strongly Jacobite family, was loyal to the British state and Ossian stressed that the martial character of the Highlands was both undesirable and firmly in the past. The poems stressed that life in such societies was often harsh and dangerous: "Battle on battle comes. Blood is poured on blood. The tombs of the valiant rise."⁴⁹⁶ This was not the kind of life modern men wanted. Ossian was a blind old man, the final relic of his society and "the last of the heroes."⁴⁹⁷ There was no threat from such men, but we could learn from them. Fingal lamented to Swaran, a defeated enemy, that:

today our fame is greatest. We shall pass away like a dream. No sound will be in the fields of our battles. Our tombs will be lost in the heath. The hunter shall not know the place of our rest. Our names may be heard in song, but the strength of our arms will cease.⁴⁹⁸

As a metaphor for eighteenth-century Scotland, this captured many of the concerns and fears of the Scottish Enlightenment. Scotland had a proud martial past but was seen by England as a potential rebel and denied arms; her independent culture and history were being denigrated and destroyed. The champions of Ossian had a dual agenda: to promote Scotland's literary and intellectual excellence and to promote the virtues of community and duty in a modern commercial age. Blair wrote that the value of the poems was to acquaint men with the values of simpler times: "discovering what objects they admired, and what pleasures they pursued, before

⁴⁹⁵ Stafford, 'Introduction', pp.v-xxi in Gaskill (ed.) 1996: xiii.

⁴⁹⁶ Macpherson C: 240.

⁴⁹⁷ Macpherson D: 5.

⁴⁹⁸ Macpherson E: 101.

those refinements of society had taken place, which enlarge indeed, and diversify the transactions, but disguise the manners of mankind.”⁴⁹⁹ He wrote that in Ossian’s time hunting and war were the principal employments, with covetousness and effeminacy unknown. For him, Fingal had all the qualities that ennobled the human character and made a man worthy of love and admiration: he was unconquerable in war; merciful to foes; wise in peace; the father of his people; affectionate to his children; distinguished on every occasion by humanity and generosity. While being affectionate to children and behaving humanely and generously might be seen as effeminate, they were grounded in a martial context. While Fingal was prepared to go to war, he also knew how to behave in peacetime. Humanity and generosity were Smith’s prerogatives for public spirit and Fingal very much embodied his considerate citizen who sought to persuade rather than force others to his opinion. The general moral of Ossian, Blair argued, was: “That Wisdom and Bravery always triumph over brutal force; or another nobler still; That the most compleat victory over an enemy is obtained by that moderation and generosity which convert him into a friend.”⁵⁰⁰

This was a widely held view for, as John Dwyer argues, “the real significance of the Ossianic poems resides less in their cultural and historical roots than in the way in which they reflected the values and spoke to the needs of cultivated eighteenth century men...”⁵⁰¹ While ‘cultivated’ men might relish the comforts and conveniences of modern life they also wanted to understand their origins and ancestry and Ossian painted a flattering picture of their ancestors. Mackenzie argued for this, along with the moral aspect, in his discussion of William Hamilton of Bangour’s poetry. He wrote that there was “a particular satisfaction in tracing the virtues and the beauty of a former age ... Nor may it be altogether without a moral use, to see, in the poetical record of a former period, the manners of our own country, in times of less luxury but not perhaps of less refinement...”⁵⁰²

⁴⁹⁹ ‘A Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian, the Son of Fingal. By Hugh Blair D.D’, pp.343-399 in Gaskill (ed.) 1996: 345.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid.: 359.

⁵⁰¹ ‘The Melancholy Savage: Text and Context in *The Poems of Ossian*’, pp.164-206 in Gaskill (ed.) 1991: 165.

⁵⁰² *Lounger* No. 42, 19/11/1785 in Mackenzie MDCCCIV Vol. 2: 62. Adam Smith had provided an unsigned preface for a 1748 edition of Hamilton’s poetry.

2. The issue of virtue in a commercial age

The Scottish Enlightenment, worried by the decline of virtue in modern commercial society, saw literature as a means of inculcating political responsibility. This was in opposition to the Kirk, who had traditionally disapproved of stage-plays: "It is indiscreet and sinfull to use such Plays and Recreations ... [such things are] offensive"⁵⁰³ Ossian would be used to inculcate both individual and national virtue, as would Home's play *Douglas*.⁵⁰⁴ Ferguson, in his 1757 defence of the play, *The Morality of Stage-Plays, seriously considered*, argued that a play full of virtuous and improving sentiments "surely deserves esteem and encouragement from every well-disposed person."⁵⁰⁵ *Douglas*, he wrote, excited the admiration of virtue, compassion to the distressed and indignation against the causes of suffering. This all improved the mind "by fostering our aversion to wickedness, in the same degree as the view of amiable characters heightens our love of virtue..."⁵⁰⁶ Good plays, like *Douglas*, were those "which excel in moving compassion, which interest an audience in behalf of amiable characters, which give the proper applause to virtue, and treat vice with ignominy and reproach."⁵⁰⁷ However, it was not only plays that could fulfil this purpose and Ferguson wrote of "the instructions and good impressions which we may receive from poetry..."⁵⁰⁸ Ossian would be championed for these reasons, as it combined contemporary Scottish Enlightenment values and concerns while preserving ancient values, perfectly suiting the arguments of those who heralded the positive advances of a commercial age while attempting to preserve the pre-commercial values of community, country and service. Macpherson considered, as had Carmichael, Hutcheson, Ferguson and Smith, the effects of the division of

⁵⁰³ Petrie, 'Rules of Good Deportment or of Good Breeding for the Use of Youth', pp. xxi-136 in Petrie 1877: 103.

⁵⁰⁴ This was a tale of lost heirs and lost loves, centring on a love triangle and had much support from those encouraging the arts in Scotland. When it was performed in Edinburgh it proved immensely popular, supposedly provoking the audience call of 'Whaur's your Wullie Shakespeare noo?'

⁵⁰⁵ 1757: 5.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid.: 10. When *Douglas* was first rehearsed in Edinburgh prominent Scottish Enlightenment members took parts: Hume and Robertson played, respectively, Glenalvon and Lord Randolph, who were both in love with the heroine, Lady Randolph; she was "masterfully portrayed by Adam Ferguson, while the Reverend Hugh Blair stole the show as 'Anna', the maid." (Fagg 1975: 39) The thought of the sometimes aggressively masculine Ferguson playing love scenes with Hume and Robertson is amusing, to say the least.

⁵⁰⁷ 1757: 17.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid.: 4.

labour, the increasing commercialisation of society and the potentially corrupting effects on manners.

The lower orders were corrupted by modern commercial society in two ways: social degradation and mental degradation. Men lived in large cities, in close proximity to each other, but knew no-one well and thus became increasingly isolated. They saw the comfortable lives of the elite and tried to ape them, to their disadvantage: "for the poorer sort, imitating the vices of the rich, were obliged to have recourse to roguery and circumvention, in order to supply their extravagance, so they were, not without reason, reckoned, in more than one sense, the worst of the people."⁵⁰⁹ This was compounded by the effects of the division of labour which made them ignorant and uncomprehending: "the very employment of a mechanic tends to contract the mind."⁵¹⁰ The elite were also corrupted as the luxury and ease allowed by commercial advances served "to weaken and debase the human mind."⁵¹¹ Such luxury and ease, along with quiet and retirement, offered men few opportunities to exert the faculties of the soul and so they withered. Men needed to be active and engaged and Macpherson compared the contemporary situation with great states of the past:

It is a curious, but just observation; that great kingdoms seldom produce great characters, which must be altogether attributed to that indolence and dissipation, which are the inseparable companions of too much property and security ... As a state, we are much more powerful than our ancestors, but we would lose by comparing individuals with them.⁵¹²

He criticised those who prioritised wealth over virtue and argued that it was wrong to assume that we were better than our ancestors: "it is ... repugnant to good sense, to be altogether blind to the imperfections of our own [age]. If our fathers had not so much wealth, they certainly had fewer vices than the present age."⁵¹³ He argued that men were too ready to condemn antiquity as a time of barbarism and ignorance.

⁵⁰⁹ Macpherson F: 36.

⁵¹⁰ Macpherson G: 482.

⁵¹¹ Ibid.: 500.

⁵¹² Ibid.: 500/501.

⁵¹³ Macpherson F: 36.

Fingal was no ignorant savage; he had travelled, experienced other cultures and his active life had stimulated his faculties. Few were as lucky in contemporary society where 'politeness' ruled:

It is from this consideration I conclude, that a traveller of penetration could gather more genuine knowledge from a tour of ancient Gaul, than from the minutest observation of all the artificial manners, and elegant refinements of modern France.⁵¹⁴

Alongside this criticism of 'artificial' manners ran an appreciation for martial virtues. He wrote of the factors that made a nation great: "virtue in peace, and bravery in war..."⁵¹⁵ These were more likely to found in earlier times:

The nobler passions of the mind never shoot forth more free and unrestrained than in those times we call barbarous. That irregular manner of life, and those manly pursuits from which barbarity takes its name, are highly favourable to a strength of mind unknown in polished times.⁵¹⁶

His men were *men*, who cherished the opportunity to prove themselves in a good cause: "A generous spirit is warmed with noble actions, and becomes ambitious of perpetuating them."⁵¹⁷ They were not afraid and did not put their own comfort before the good of their nation. Connal, for example, proclaims: "My soul brightens in danger, and exults in the noise of battle. I am of the race of steel; my fathers never feared."⁵¹⁸ However, Macpherson stressed that such men did not actively seek war, knew the consequences of their actions and never harmed the innocent. Fingal articulates the noble warrior's moral location: "I was born in the midst of battles, and my steps must move in blood to my tomb. But my hand did not injure the weak, my steel did not touch the feeble in arms."⁵¹⁹ Fingal and his men were brave and resolute as their age had allowed their faculties to develop and their noble passions to flourish

⁵¹⁴ Macpherson G: 532.

⁵¹⁵ Macpherson A: 47.

⁵¹⁶ Macpherson B: 205.

⁵¹⁷ Macpherson A: 47.

⁵¹⁸ Macpherson E: 74.

⁵¹⁹ Macpherson H: 120.

but in modern commercial society men were denied such opportunities. "The times of regular government, and polished manners, are therefore to be wished for by the feeble and weak in mind. An unsettled state, and the convulsions which attend it, is the proper field for an exalted character, and the exertion of great parts."⁵²⁰

Macpherson's concept of martial virtue is further illustrated by his treatment of women. Mackenzie argued that this was an area which made one suspicious of Ossian's authenticity: "the tenderness and delicacy of sentiment, with regard to women, so conspicuous in these poems, are circumstances very difficult to reconcile with the rude and uncultivated age in which the poet is supposed to have lived."⁵²¹ What is more surprising to modern readers is how engaged and involved his women are, a subject discussed by Lisa Kozlowski.⁵²² Although there were 'damsels in distress', there were also women who defended themselves and fought. Oithona, for example, was raped by one of the enemy but, instead of letting her man avenge her, sought her own revenge, donning armour and becoming a warrior. Other fighting women included Crimora, Utha, Colmal, Inibaca, Dar-Thula and Morna.

However, there are two important points to note: women were only in battle when they were disguised as men and they were fighting for different reasons than men. As regards the former, Macpherson clearly reserved the role of soldier for men, writing of women being "in the armour of men..."⁵²³ Women might be able to perform some military functions by aping men but they were less effective (Crimora, for example, accidentally kills her man) and fighting under false pretences. Macpherson does not condone this 'unnatural' behaviour and so we might expect to find criticism of men who behaved more 'femininely', more emotionally. However, "it is a point of honour for an Ossianic warrior to be able to show emotion, especially in recalling his brave

⁵²⁰ Macpherson B: 205. In this discussion there are obvious similarities between Macpherson and Ferguson, in particular of the *Essay*. However, I would agree with Dafydd Moore's argument: "Macpherson has a far simpler (we might say cruder) conception of the nature of society and its development than does Ferguson. Macpherson is unable to maintain Ferguson's balance between the need for, and positive benefits of, progress, and a regret for the current absence of some noble characteristics that have been lost along the way." (1997: 10)

⁵²¹ Mirror No. 13, 9/3/1779 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 1: 89.

⁵²² 'Terrible women and tender men: A Study of Gender in Macpherson's *Ossian*', pp.119-135 in Stafford and Gaskill (eds.) 1998.

⁵²³ Macpherson I: 13.

ancestors and deceased friends.”⁵²⁴ As Kozlowski notes, while there is a suitable time for such behaviour: “the tears of a warrior are deemed acceptable only on certain occasions – never during, but only after, battle. For the Ossianic warrior, there is a time to war and a time to weep.”⁵²⁵ The same would be true of Scott’s warriors. In *Waverley*, Major Talbot, although a valiant soldier and resolute in battle, cries on hearing that his pregnant wife has lost their child and may herself die. He is not ashamed to weep for his wife: “She is a woman ... who may justify even a soldier’s tears.”⁵²⁶ He has been captured by Charles Stuart’s army but Stuart himself releases him to go to his wife, with a sentiment worthy of Ossian: “I come here to war with men, but not to distress or endanger women.”⁵²⁷ In Ossian’s work there was an emotional division of labour. As regards the latter, these women did not fight for the love of their country or to defend their homes, as men did, but to avenge themselves or to follow their men. Macpherson portrayed their motives as less ‘pure’ and disinterested than men’s. They were motivated by purely personal considerations with no regard to wider national issues. This could be taken as implied criticism of Standing Armies: militias fight for the love of country; Standing Armies fight for money, for their own selfish interests. Ossian, of course, played a role in the militia controversy.

3. *The militia issue*

Ossian’s perceived usefulness in the militia agitations was another reason for the support it received. John Robertson’s 1985 *The Scottish Enlightenment and the Militia Issue* examines the situation in great depth. As he writes, the Scottish militia agitations began in earnest in 1757 with the passing of Pitt’s English Militia Act. This Act was to establish a national force of 32,000 to be raised by quotas in each county; eligible men from 18-25 were to be chosen by census and would serve seven years. Scotland was excluded, ostensibly for financial reasons, but most believed that

⁵²⁴ Kozlowski in Stafford and Gaskill (eds.) 1998: 134.

⁵²⁵ Ibid.

⁵²⁶ Scott 1986: 259.

⁵²⁷ Ibid.: 261.

it was because of doubts over her loyalty, that the British state feared training and arming potential rebels. This exclusion angered many Scots and the situation was exacerbated when a hostile French squadron was spotted in Scottish waters in 1760. As a result, in the April of the same year a Parliamentary Bill was introduced aiming to extend the militia to Scotland; it failed.⁵²⁸ However, this was not the end of the campaign and in 1762 the Poker Club was founded to promote the establishment of a Scottish militia.⁵²⁹

As J. G. A. Pocock argues, the English refusal to extend to them a militia was a crisis in the Unionism of many Scottish Enlightenment figures. It indicated that the government disliked and distrusted them and “destroyed their principal mechanism, originally proposed by Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun, for relating martial virtue to modern society.”⁵³⁰ Men such as Ferguson, Carlyle, Home and Robertson believed that they had demonstrated their loyalty to the state: Ferguson had been a military Chaplain; Carlyle, Home and Robertson, who had been in Edinburgh when Charles Stuart’s army marched on her, had sought to defend her by participating in a citizen militia. They later criticised the defence of the city, arguing that the neglect of a militia was partly responsible for the success of Stuart’s army as the untrained Lowlanders could not resist armed Highlanders.⁵³¹

⁵²⁸ The dates of the agitations coincided with the ‘Seven Years War’, 1756-1763 and the American War of Independence, 1775-1783. During both there were concerns that Britain’s enemies would see Scotland’s long coastline as the best location for an invasion. In November 1775, John Stuart, Lord Mountstuart (who had been tutored by Adam Ferguson) introduced another Scottish Militia Bill; it too failed. It was the later French Revolutionary Wars, 1793-1799, which saw the extension of the militia to Scotland in 1797.

⁵²⁹ The Poker Club, 1762-1784, was named by Ferguson. The name was to signify stirring up enthusiasm but to be vague about what for; it was thought to call it the Militia Club would be too provocative. The membership was drawn from groups central to the Scottish Enlightenment – authors, thinkers, Moderate ministers, lawyers and the landed gentry – and included Blair, Carlyle, Henry Dundas, Hume, Robertson and Smith.

⁵³⁰ Pocock 1999b: 269.

⁵³¹ Edinburgh had ‘Trained Bands’ of those who were able to bear arms (from the right socio-economic groups), amounting nominally to 16 companies with eighty to a hundred men in each. If they had been trained or disciplined they might have been useful but, as Walter Scott wrote: “for many years, the officers of the Trained Bands had practised no other discipline, than was implied in a particular mode of flourishing their wine-glasses on festive occasions...” (1872: 947)

As G. E. Davie argues, many Scottish Enlightenment thinkers worried that commercial life “left no room for the fully developed humanity of men like Fingal and Ossian who both successfully combined the now specialised roles of statesman, soldier, poet and musician.”⁵³² Ossian spoke of men who fought not for money or land but for honour, as when Fingal rejected a defeated army’s offer of possessions: “Nor ship, replied the king, shall Fingal take, nor the lands of many hills.”⁵³³ Ossian’s contribution was intended to illustrate that Scotland had a proud martial past and thus, by implication, was entitled to a militia. This proud martial past was not confined to Scots fighting for Scotland: as Devine writes, Scots had always fought in European armies, with 60,000 recruited for different forces during the Thirty Years War. Kidd notes that pride in Scottish arms had extended to the exploits of Scottish exiles in European battles and complemented the achievements of Scottish intellectuals in continental universities: “The humanist palladium of ‘arms and letters’ provided a way of extracting honour from the diaspora of Scots from economic backwardness in recent centuries.”⁵³⁴ For the militia agitators, such military vigour should be applied to domestic as well as international defence.

Ossian, as would Scott’s work, located Scotland’s independent martial spirit in the past, thus emphasising that any separatist tendency was long dead. Ferguson, who was an avid supporter of Macpherson and Ossian, articulated most clearly that the purpose of a militia was to adapt the inheritance of the Scottish martial past to the new circumstances of Union and commercial society. The militia could help promote virtue and contribute to constructing a Unionist Scottish national identity. As Oz-Salzberger argues:

The hailing of an ancient Celtic bard and the agitation for a Scottish militia were mutually reinforcing statements of Scottish identity within Britain, and Ferguson was uniquely equipped for supporting both causes. His Gaelic background was important for the promotion of Ossian, just as his valiant military past lent credibility to his campaign on behalf of a militia.⁵³⁵

⁵³² 1981: 22.

⁵³³ Macpherson E: 101.

⁵³⁴ 1993: 25.

⁵³⁵ 1995: 97.

Ferguson's arguments for a militia were seen in all his work, but in this period they were most forcibly expressed in his 1760 *Sister Peg*.⁵³⁶ This told of how John Bull (the English people) and Sister Peg (the Scottish people) were at odds. John was worried by his sister's garret lodgers (the Highlanders), who had been previously tempted to mischief by young Mr Geoffrey (Charles Stuart). However, the mischief had not done much damage as John's gamekeepers (the Standing Army) gave them "a stunning blow in the guts" (Culloden).⁵³⁷ Time passed and John decided that his sons should learn to defend him (the passing of the 1757 English Militia Act) but did not allow Peg's sons to do the same for her. Peg asked why she should have to beg for this, for was it not "the birthright of all mankind, liberty to defend myself?"⁵³⁸ Ferguson concluded: "But never did the father of a family, by any supercilious neglect or act of violence, throw down the offspring of his own blood, into such a state of deplorable inequality."⁵³⁹ The reason for this, of course, was English distrust of the Scots, something amply demonstrated not only by the militia controversy but also by the reaction to Ossian. A similar phenomenon had been seen in the seventeenth century, when English commentators accused a Scottish king, James VI/I, of "penning up English valour" by keeping them out of wars and away from opportunities to practise their virtue.⁵⁴⁰ Now the Scots accused the English of penning up Scottish valour by denying them a militia.

4. National prejudice and 'Scottophobia'

One thing clearly demonstrated by both the militia issue and the reaction to Ossian was the level of dislike and distrust of Scots and Scotland in England. National prejudice against Scots was rife, crossing party and class lines. Sher argues this was particularly so amongst English men of letters, who resented the Scots' challenge; there also existed the belief that the Scots were too often motivated by the love of

⁵³⁶ *Sister Peg*, an anonymous pamphlet, was at one point attributed to Hume. It is different in style, and to some degree tone, to the *Reflections* but is concerned with the same issue.

⁵³⁷ 1982: 58.

⁵³⁸ *Ibid.*: 79.

⁵³⁹ *Ibid.*: 103.

⁵⁴⁰ Osborne B: 143.

(English) money and jobs. A key component of this prejudice was the belief that the Scots constituted a conspiracy or cabal to advance their interests at the expense of others and sometimes at the expense of the truth: "Lying and cheating were commonly practised, it was thought, for the sake of this greater national good."⁵⁴¹ As Sher argues, the dispute over Ossian has to be seen not only in a literary but also a political context. Both English men of letters and politicians were threatened by, and resentful of, their Scottish counterparts and Ossian became a focus for this: it was assessed not as poetry but as a statement of national duplicity.

The political background to this was the accession of George III and the premiership of a Scot, John Stuart, the third Earl of Bute.⁵⁴² National prejudice had been a factor in James VI/I's reception and feelings had grown stronger since the Union, the '15 and the '45. Osborne had complained of James' "too palpable partiality towards his country-men..."⁵⁴³ The same complaint was made about Bute, Macpherson's patron to whom *Temora* was dedicated, who was attacked for supposedly favouring Scots and Scottish interests - he found places and pensions for several Scottish Enlightenment figures, including Home and Robertson - over English ones.⁵⁴⁴ Although Bute resigned in 1763, prejudice against Scots continued. Horace Walpole's attitude to Ossian is typical of this:

I cannot believe it genuine; I cannot believe a regular poem of six books has been preserved, uncorrupted, by oral tradition, from times before Christianity was introduced into the island. What! preserved unadulterated by savages dispersed among the mountains, and so often driven from their dens...⁵⁴⁵

⁵⁴¹ Sher, 'Percy, Shaw and the Ferguson 'Cheat': National Prejudice in the Ossian Wars', pp.207-245 in Stafford and Gaskill (eds.) 1998: 212.

⁵⁴² George III, 1738-1820, monarch from 1760 and the first of the Hanoverian monarchs to be born and raised in Britain; John Stuart, 1713-1792, Scottish representative peer and tutor and companion to George III, on whose accession he was brought into the government. Bute was Prime Minister 1762-1763. His economic and foreign policies were unpopular: he introduced new taxes; his government signed the 1763 Treaty of Paris that ended the Seven Years War.

⁵⁴³ Osborne B: 145.

⁵⁴⁴ Bute had employed Home as his Secretary after he was forced to resign by Kirk authorities for writing *Douglas*. He also secured him a state pension of £300 p/a.

⁵⁴⁵ From a letter to George Montagu, 8/12/1761 in Walpole 1939: 187.

These doubts over Ossian's authenticity were not confined to the English. Hume was suspicious but was willing to be persuaded by reasoned arguments and documentary evidence, encouraging Macpherson to produce these. He looked for proof that "may convince us, that our fondness of them is not altogether founded on national prepossessions, which, however, you know to be a little strong."⁵⁴⁶ As John Valdimir Price writes, Hume's readiness to find in his country's cultural aspirations an inclination to unquestioningly accept something that might prove spurious was not only a measure of his scepticism but also of Scotland's increasing sense of its national identity and the need for a literary heritage. This can also be demonstrated by his attitude to William Wallace, of whom he wrote: "This man, whose valorious exploits are the object of just admiration, but have been much exaggerated by the traditions of his countrymen..."⁵⁴⁷ Eventually, Hume concluded that the poems were not authentic. He attributed the positive Scottish reception of Ossian to 'national prepossessions' but not to conspiracy or corruption. The same was not true of English critics, as is best illustrated by Samuel Johnson's reaction.⁵⁴⁸ Although, as William Ferguson reminds us, nothing about Ossian is totally clear and there was more to Johnson, in his criticism of Ossian and the Scots he came across as "an instinctive, overbearing John Bull chauvinist."⁵⁴⁹ In his *A Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland* he denigrated Scots and Scotland, an attitude he displayed consistently:

'Sir, (said he), you [the Scots] have learnt a little from us, and you think yourselves very great men. Hume would never have written History, had not Voltaire written it before him. He is an echo of Voltaire.' BOSWELL. 'But Sir, we have Lord Kames.' JOHNSON. 'You have Lord Kames. Keep him; ha, ha, ha! We don't envy you him.'⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁶ From a letter to Sir David Dalrymple, 16/8/1760, cited in Valdimir Price, 'Ossian and the Canon in the Scottish Enlightenment', pp.109-128 in Gaskill (ed.) 1991: 114.

⁵⁴⁷ Hume and Smollett, Vol. 2 1834: 232.

⁵⁴⁸ Samuel Johnson, 1709-1784, lexicographer, essayist and critic. James Boswell, 1740-1795, Scottish man of letters, best known for his biography of Johnson. Johnson and Boswell would take a tour of Scotland in 1773.

⁵⁴⁹ 1998: 234.

⁵⁵⁰ Boswell 1969: 89/90. Italics in original. It was not just Ossian that Johnson dismissed, writing of Home's *Douglas* as "that foolish play..." ('Boswell, 'The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, Esq.', pp.147-493 in Johnson and Boswell 1996: 437) He did not think much of Henry Mackenzie's work either, Boswell tells us: "He had looked at a novel, called *The Man of the World* ... but thought there was nothing in it." (Ibid.: 369)

Johnson, from the outset, refused to accept that the poems were genuine or had any merit: James Boswell has him arguing that *Fingal* was “as gross an imposition as ever the world was troubled with.”⁵⁵¹ Johnson, who was not an expert, argued that Erse was not a written language; a spurious point, given that Macpherson claimed the poems were preserved through the oral tradition. He argued that the Scots were too credulous and that they accepted Ossian’s authenticity too easily:

The Scots have something to plead for their easy reception of an improbable fiction: they are seduced by their fondness for their supposed ancestors. A Scotchman must be considered a very sturdy moralist, who does not love *Scotland* better than the truth...⁵⁵²

Macpherson had claimed that Ossian was undiscovered for so long because of a wish to protect it from English attitudes:

more than a common mediocrity of taste is required, to relish his poems as they deserve. Those who alone were capable to make a translation were, no doubt, conscious of this, and chose rather to admire their poet in secret, than see him received, with coldness, in an English dress.⁵⁵³

Johnson mocked the idea that the Scots could have any superior tastes or sensibilities: “I hear the father of Ossian boasts of two chests more of ancient poetry, which he suppresses, because they are too good for the *English*.”⁵⁵⁴ The English, who felt that *they* were clearly superior, resented Scots who refused to know their place. As William Ferguson argues: “Not the least of Macpherson’s faults in English eyes was that he was not a wretched Scottish cringer like his contemporary and sometime friend and admirer, that brilliant and erratic crawler, James Boswell.”⁵⁵⁵ Johnson and his friends involved Ferguson into the controversy and, as Gaskill argues, an extract from one of his letters reveals the difficulties faced by Ossian’s defenders:

⁵⁵¹ Ibid.: 340.

⁵⁵² ‘A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland’, pp.1-145 in Johnson and Boswell 1996: 105. Italics in original.

⁵⁵³ Macpherson B: 214.

⁵⁵⁴ Johnson in Johnson and Boswell 1996: 103. Italics in original.

⁵⁵⁵ 1998: 227.

What was to be done in the face of such dogmatic close-mindedness and racial bigotry (for that is what it was)? The hopelessness of the situation was most impressively articulated by a man who ... was dragged into the Ossianic controversy in a disgraceful manner, and was perhaps the only party to emerge with his honour intact. On 21 July Adam Ferguson wrote to Bishop Douglas:

'These Gentlemen I see are never to be convinced. If conjectural Evidence is brought they call out for direct Testimony: If Testimony they call out for the Ipsa Corpora: If the Ipsa Corpora, then Mr McPherson or someone else has made a Translation into Earse from the Original English of Mr McPherson's Forgery. And I despair of seeing the matter cleared up to their Satisfaction as neither Originals or Scotch much less highland Testimony is to be admitted. If there be no merit in these products they ought to have been forgotten long ago. If there is I wish we had the supposed Originals. The Specimens I have seen ... are very interesting as Efforts of the Imagination and the Heart equal to any poetry I know, and whether genuine or spurious I shall never be ashamed of having mistaken them for Originals.'⁵⁵⁶

Johnson thought that Ferguson, as a Scot, would always love his country more than the truth. However, as Gaskill notes, Ferguson was a Gaelic speaker and knew of the Ossianic legend and, given this, was in a better position to judge Macpherson and his translation. He may have been too close to be considered objective but there was no reason to doubt his honesty. "But unless we are to equate objectivity with ignorance and extreme prejudice, there is really no excuse for devaluing his testimony and taking our cue from Johnson instead. Yet this is what has happened."⁵⁵⁷

Ossian can tell us much about eighteenth-century Scotland. Created by a Highlander for Lowlanders, the poems contributed to the construction of "a largely fictitious Scottish identity, centred upon a symbolic identification with a mythical Highland past and its heroic but humane protagonists."⁵⁵⁸ Ossian's heroes were brave and warlike but also sociable, enjoying the company of family and friends. They would fight to defend what was theirs and to defend their friends but did not seek conflict. Eighteenth-century Scots saw in the poems:

⁵⁵⁶ Letter of 21/7/1781, cited in Gaskill, 'Introduction', pp.1-18 in Gaskill (ed.) 1991: 14/15.

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid.: 15. There is not room for full details of Ferguson's involvement but for an excellent statement of events, see Sher, 'Percy, Shaw and the Ferguson 'Cheat': National Prejudice in the Ossian Wars', pp.207-245 in Stafford and Gaskill (eds.) 1998.

⁵⁵⁸ Dwyer in Gaskill (ed.) 1991: 164.

the fire and enthusiasm of the most early times, combined with an amazing degree of regularity and art. We find tenderness, and even delicacy of sentiment, greatly predominant over fierceness and barbarity. Our hearts are melted with the softest feelings, and at the same time elevated with the highest ideas of magnanimity, generosity and true heroism.⁵⁵⁹

Ossian lamented the passing of an ancient Highland life but presented a moral legend for a future generation of Scots. As Dwyer notes, the Scots needed to remain brave fighters for reasons both practical and ideological. Practically, warfare would continue to be a major industry for unemployed Scots; ideologically, military training would contribute to the education and identification of citizens. The new Scots would be civic patriots who not only defended the state from outside attack but internal corruption. They would be both personally and politically responsible. The Scottish Enlightenment would utilise literature to encourage this behaviour and Ossian, with its neutering of Highland and Scottish identity, was ideal. Ossian would be used to promote Scottish identity inside the Union, to affirm Scotland's grand past and request that Scots be allowed to continue contributing martially.

5. Highland and Scottish identity

Ossian was part of a process of creating a Scottish Unionist identity, part of which was distrust of the Highlands. The Highlands are, still, often characterised as backwards, with Robbins writing of "the ignorance and superstition of the Highlands"; the portrayal of the Scots as more backwards than the English also continues.⁵⁶⁰ For example, in Part One, Chapter 2: 2 of this Thesis, I cited Lerner's argument that Cromwell's actions in stilling the Scottish witch-hunt demonstrated that "English good sense prevailed over Scottish superstition."⁵⁶¹ Ossian was part of an identity-seeking project by the Scottish Enlightenment, a dual process of identity creation: the Lowland Scots distinguishing themselves from the barbaric, and later

⁵⁵⁹ Blair in Gaskill (ed.) 1996: 349.

⁵⁶⁰ 1961: 177.

⁵⁶¹ 1981: 75.

disloyal, Highlanders; the English denigrating Highland and Scottish identity and demonstrating a national prejudice against Scots and Scotland.

Scots on Scotland: One of the best known-passages in James VI/I's *Basilikon Doron* comments on the lack of civility in the Highlands and Islands. He comments that there are two sorts of people: those who dwell on the mainland and are "barbarous for the most part, and yet mixed with some shew of civilitie", and those who dwell on the Isles who are "alluterly barbares, without any sort of shew of civilitie."⁵⁶² However, this was certainly not the first example of the stigmatisation of the Highlands as a barbaric place, with the tradition stretching back to at least the 1520s and John Mair's work. The distinctive nature of the Highlands and Islands is a central issue in Scottish history and political thought. It would move up the agenda in the eighteenth-century with the impact of the 1707 Union, the '15 and the '45. For the Whig establishment the Highlands were a hindrance to progress: Kidd argues that, for Whigs, not only would Jacobite disloyalty threaten Scotland's 'Glorious Revolution' settlement but also that Highlanders were an obstruction to economic improvement. He characterises Whig policy thus:

The pacification of the region and the defeat of Jacobitism were but the initial goals of Highland policy. Scottish Whigs intended to transform the people of the Highlands from a nuisance into a national resource, that is, economically productive as well as loyal and law-abiding.⁵⁶³

The Highlanders and Islanders were seen as 'other', either criticised for being 'backwards' or compared to indigenous peoples. A fine example of this is Boswell's writing. When visiting Skye with Johnson he comments on the inhabitants almost as a natural curiosity: "The usual figure of a Sky-boy, is a lown with bare legs and feet, a dirty kilt, ragged coat and waistcoat, a bare head, and a stick in his hand, which, I suppose, is partly to help the lazy rogue to walk, partly to serve as a kind of defensive weapon."⁵⁶⁴ When he and Johnson are rowed from Skye Boswell does not identify with their boatmen as fellow Scots: "Our boatmen were rude singers, and

⁵⁶² James VI/I A: 222.

⁵⁶³ 1999: 134.

⁵⁶⁴ Boswell in Johnson and Boswell 1996: 323.

seemed so like wild Indians, that a very little imagination was necessary to give one an impression of being upon an American river.”⁵⁶⁵

Perhaps the best illustration of Lowland Scots distancing themselves from Highlanders is in writing on the '45. John Home's history of the '45, his 1802 *The History of the Rebellion in the Year 1745*, was dedicated to George III and stressed the otherness of the Highlanders, the loyalty of the Lowlanders and emphasised the Lowlands' close relationship with England. He wrote that the condition and manners of the Highlanders “were unknown in England, and the low-country of Scotland, to a degree almost incredible...”⁵⁶⁶ The Highlanders were “essentially different from the other inhabitants of Britain.”⁵⁶⁷ Scotland was divided into the Highlands and Lowlands, which Home portrayed as two separate political entities: “these countries, whose inhabitants speak a different language, and wear a different garb...”⁵⁶⁸ The Highlanders' clothes and appearance, though flattering, emphasised their difference: “it shewed their naked limbs, which were strong and muscular ... their stern countenances and bushy uncombed hair, gave them a fierce, barbarous and imposing aspect.”⁵⁶⁹ He went on to stress the '45 was not a Scottish but a Highland rebellion: “the Highlanders took arms against Government.”⁵⁷⁰ Home is also keen to stress that he took arms against the Highlanders, emphasising his personal, as well as cultural, loyalty.⁵⁷¹ He also stressed the Irish role, as did many other unionist Scots. Home's history perfectly accords with A. J. Youngson's Hanoverian version of Scottish history, in which he writes of Charles' Irish advisors: “It was to these latter that the '45 essentially owed its origins; in spite of appearances, the rebellion was really an Irish adventure.”⁵⁷²

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid.: 354/355.

⁵⁶⁶ 1802: vi.

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid.: 3.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁹ Ibid.: 104.

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid.: v.

⁵⁷¹ Home's unionism can also be seen in *Douglas*. He has Lord Randolph (a central character) lament: “War I detest: but war with foreign foes/Where manners, language, and whose looks are strange/ Is not so horrid, nor to me so hateful,/ As that which with our neighbours oft we wage...” He continues by lamenting the loss of life when Scotland and England fight. “The youthful warrior is a clod of clay./Thus falls the prime of either hapless land;/And such the fruit of Scotch and English wars.” (MDCCLXVIII: 10)

⁵⁷² 1996: 66.

Walter Scott also wrote on the '45 and the Highlands, both fiction and history. His use of fiction is considered in Chapter 8 of this Part. It is his history that is of interest here, in particular in his *Tales of a Grandfather*, in which he stresses the otherness of the Highlanders. Scott, a loyal British subject and friend of kings, began by calling the '45 an "unfortunate insurrection" but later referred to it as "the civil war of 1745-6..."⁵⁷³ He portrayed the Highlanders as men "speaking an unknown language wearing a wild and unwonted dress, and bearing much of the external appearance of barbarians..."⁵⁷⁴ In an involved excerpt we can see how he compared the events of the '45 to fiction, stressed the otherness of the Highlanders and argued that only a minority of Highlanders were 'out':

there can be no doubt that it presents a dazzling picture to the imagination, being a romance of real life equal in splendour and interest to any which could be devised by fiction. A primitive people, residing in a remote quarter of the empire, and themselves but a small portion of the Scottish Highlanders, fearlessly attempted to place the British Crown on the head of the last scion of these ancient kings...⁵⁷⁵

At this point Scott brought in reality, arguing that, although young and handsome, Charles Stuart's Catholicism and belief in Divine Right would have made him a bad king. The Highland army were lucky in their first engagements but this luck could not hold against a professional, modern army. The clan system was already dying and the '45 was a good way to go out, with Scott arguing that it was beneficial for "the fame" of the Highlands that "the spirit of the patriarchal system, like the light of a dying lamp, should have collected itself into one bright flash before its final extinction; and in the short period of a few months, should have exhibited itself in a purer and more brilliant character than it had displayed during the course of ages."⁵⁷⁶

Writing such as Home and Scott's on the '45 and the Highlands demonstrates the atmosphere in which the Scottish Enlightenment wrote. Scotland was perceived by many of the English, especially the political class, to be disloyal and so unionist

⁵⁷³ 1872: 713; 917.

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid.: 1002.

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid.: 1085.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid.: 1089.

Scots stressed the otherness of the Highlanders to distinguish themselves. They tried to argue that it was not Scotland but merely a small part of her population, encouraged by an exiled prince and the Irish, which had rebelled. They asserted the difference between the educated, enlightened Lowlands and the backward, uncivilised Highlands. The Lowlanders thought themselves superior to the Highlanders but were, in turn, considered inferior by the English. In Scottish Enlightenment writing on conceptions of political responsibility, it was argued that the elite should be allowed and encouraged to contribute as fully as possible to the life of their state and, for many, the militia agitations became a symbol of this contribution. The British government's refusal to extend the militia to Scotland demonstrated the degree to which Scotland was distrusted; the reaction to Ossian demonstrated the contempt many of the English had for the Scots. Highland and Scottish identity were conflated in a negative way and hence unionist Scots sought to separate them.

The English on Scotland: As previously argued, there was much resentment against James VI/I, a Scot, taking the English throne.⁵⁷⁷ This was symptomatic of English national prejudice against Scotland, an example of which can be found in Sir Antony Welldon's 1617 *A Perfect Description of the People and Country of Scotland*.⁵⁷⁸ This torrent of hatred, vitriol and misogyny begins by commenting that Scotland's wholesome atmosphere was polluted by "the stinking people that inhabit it."⁵⁷⁹ He goes on to warn that the food was unpleasant and unsafe. "For their butter and cheese I will not meddle withal at this time, nor any man else at any time that loves his life."⁵⁸⁰ He denigrated Edinburgh, referring to it as a parish or a town, "for a city I cannot call it", and complained of the unsanitary conditions: "so stinking a town as Edenburg, in lousy Scotland..."⁵⁸¹ However, he saves most of his contempt for Scottish women, referring to them as 'beasts' and 'monsters' unlike other women:

⁵⁷⁷ James was not the only 'foreign' king who provoked dislike. Raynor, an English historian, argues that while George I was unpopular for several reasons, the most significant was that "he had made no attempt to tone down his unEnglishness. William III had also been a foreigner, but at least he spoke our tongue..." (1950: 182)

⁵⁷⁸ pp.75-89 in Scott (ed.) 1811 Vol. 2. The edition cited here was published in 1659.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid.: 75.

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid.: 76.

⁵⁸¹ Ibid.: 81; 89.

“their flesh naturally abhors cleanliness...”⁵⁸² He wrote that their breath smelled, their linen stank of urine and their bodies of sweat. “To be chained in marriage with one of them, were to be tied to a dead carcassee, and cast into a stinking ditch.”⁵⁸³

This English tradition of denigrating Scotland was continued in the eighteenth-century by Johnson. His less than positive contribution to the Ossian controversy was examined earlier in this Chapter; his attitude to Scotland as a whole is amply demonstrated in his *Journey*. He is offhand, patronising or plain rude. He belittles Scottish universities (which at this time had far better reputations than England’s):

Men bred in the universities of *Scotland* cannot be expected to be often decorated with the splendours of ornamental erudition, but they obtain a common mediocrity of knowledge, between learning and ignorance, not inadequate to the purposes of common life...⁵⁸⁴

He dismisses whole towns in a few words, such as Dundee, “where I remember nothing remarkable...”⁵⁸⁵ He dismisses a whole language and culture when discussing Erse: “It is the rude speech of a barbarous people, who had few thoughts to express, and were content, as they conceived grossly, to be grossly understood.”⁵⁸⁶ He praises those who have learnt English because their accent and conversation is easier for the English and also because the English language civilises:

The conversation of the Scots grows every day less unpleasing to the English; their peculiarities wear fast away; their dialect is likely to become in half a century provincial and rustick, even to themselves. The great, the learned, the ambitious, and the vain, all cultivate the English phrase, and the English pronunciation...⁵⁸⁷

⁵⁸² Ibid.: 87.

⁵⁸³ Ibid.: 88.

⁵⁸⁴ Johnson in Johnson and Boswell 1996: 142. Italics in original.

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid.: 9.

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid.: 101.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid.: 143.

It was not only the English language which civilised but also English customs and manners and he argues that the Scots did not know how to live well until the English taught them: "Till the Union made them acquainted with English manners, the culture of their lands was unskilful, and their domestick life unformed; their tables were coarse as the feasts of the Eskimeaux, and their houses as filthy as the cottages of the Hottentots."⁵⁸⁸ Although he generalises about the Scots he, like the Scottish writers considered earlier, does draw a distinction between the Highlands and Lowlands and seems to believe there are two distinct nations in Scotland. He writes of "the national character of the Highlanders"; he describes Highlanders as "a nation..."⁵⁸⁹ He compares the Highlanders to various native peoples and argues that they are alien to the Lowlanders. "To the southern inhabitants of Scotland, the state of the mountains and the islands is equally unknown with that of *Borneo* or *Sumatra*: Of both they have heard a little, and guess the rest. They are strangers to the language and manners ... of the people..."⁵⁹⁰

Boswell, a Scot himself, dealt with Johnson's prejudice by arguing that it was not just Scotland Johnson denigrated and that he thought all who were not English uncivilised: "he allowed himself to look on all nations but his own as barbarians..."⁵⁹¹ If he seemed particularly prejudiced against the Scots it was because he saw more of them and thought their success in England exceeded that deserving to their ability. Boswell goes on to argue that such prejudice should be ignored or humoured:

the English are better animals than the Scots; they are nearer the sun; their blood is richer, and more mellow: but when I humour any of them in an outrageous contempt of Scotland, I fairly own I treat them as children. And thus I have at some moments, found myself obliged to treat even Dr Johnson.⁵⁹²

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid.: 23.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid.: 24; 43.

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid.: 77. Italics in original.

⁵⁹¹ In Johnson and Boswell 1996: 168.

⁵⁹² Ibid.: 169. Boswell has often been criticised for tolerating Johnson's xenophobia, as can be seen in Horace Walpole's assessment of Johnson, where he discussed his 'ill nature': "He loved to dispute to show his superiority. If his opponents were weak, he told them they were fools; if they vanquished him, he was scurrilous – to nobody more than Boswell himself, who was contemptible for flattering

However, it was not always easy to ignore such prejudice, which Scottish Enlightenment figures were all too aware of. An example of this can be seen in Smith's advice to Hume when Jean-Jacques Rousseau publicly attacked him.⁵⁹³ He advised Hume to refrain from responding for he would find himself against the Church, the Whigs and the whole English nation, for they all loved "to mortify a Scotchman..."⁵⁹⁴ As Sher argued, English national prejudice against the Scots was rife, crossing party and class lines and the controversy over Ossian would be a focus for this debate. English attitudes towards Scotland demonstrate the degree to which Scotland was seen as a foreign nation. There was political Union but little cultural union. Scots felt forced to justify their place in the Union, to prove their loyalty and demonstrate their intellectual and literary abilities.

In conclusion, the militia controversy and the English reaction to Ossian had brought home to the Scots their inferior status in the Union. In terms of political responsibility, as understood through the concept of political persona, the Scots were held by many of the English to be disqualified from active political roles because of their unsuitable traits. In the introduction to this Part I argued that the Scots could be seen as the lower orders to England's elite. Like Ferguson's lower orders, they were excluded from active political responsibility in the form of a militia. Like the lower orders, their contribution was seen to be worth less than the English elite's.

Scotland and England's relationship can also be represented through the metaphor of gender. Ferguson, in his *Sister Peg*, portrayed the Scots as sister to the more powerful John Bull. For him, England might not have been metaphorically 'screwing' Scotland but did dominate her. Peg had to ask her brother for permission to defend herself, placing her in an unacceptable position of subservience. For the Scottish Enlightenment, such subservience to England was unpleasant. Scotland was widely recognised as a centre of academic excellence worldwide, unlike England,

him so grossly, and for enduring the coarse things he was continually vomiting on Boswell's own country, Scotland." (From a letter to Miss Berry, 26/5/1791 in Walpole 1939: 204/205)

⁵⁹³ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 1712-1778, philosopher, whose works include *Discourses*, 1750 and 1755; *The Social Contract*, 1762; *Emile*, 1762.

⁵⁹⁴ Smith to Hume, 6/7/1766 in Mossner and Ross (eds.) 1977: 113.

and Ossian was part of a campaign to assert her academic, literary and political reputation.

While Ferguson portrayed Scotland and England's relationship as that of sister and brother, Mitchison characterises the Union as a marriage. If we develop this, we can characterise Scotland – the junior partner, who ceded political rights upon Union – as wife to England's husband. The Scots were the financially and politically dependent wife. Ossian substantiates this metaphor, with the English unwilling and unable to accept that the Scots could have been advanced enough to produce and preserve any epic poetry. Women were generally perceived as less intelligent than men; Scotland was seen by many of the English as a backward, less developed nation. Women were viewed as the weaker sex and more vulnerable to sexual temptation; Scottish infidelity to the Union was demonstrated by their flings with the Stuarts in 1715 and 1745. Women's judgement was not to be trusted as they were too emotional and illogical; the Scots could not be trusted to be sensible, as they had demonstrated in 1715 and 1745. Men had the power to make decisions for their wives; England had the power to make decisions for Scotland. Women were traditionally economically dependent on their husbands; Scotland was certainly economically dependent upon England. In marriage there was an unequal division of power as the husband knew best; in Union there was an unequal division of power as England knew best. Women should know their place and not trespass on men's territory; Scots should know their place and not take English jobs.

Chapter Seven: Henry Mackenzie

Henry Mackenzie is a fascinating character whose life and work have been unjustly ignored.⁵⁹⁵ His work, both fiction and journalism, had an overarching aim – that of promoting and encouraging political responsibility. He can be positioned between Ferguson and Smith, wishing to preserve certain aspects of Scottish culture while encouraging sociableness, tolerance and politeness.

In his lifetime he was at the centre of Scottish civil society and contributed fully to the political and cultural life of his country. The ‘Scottish Addison’ was many things.⁵⁹⁶ In the political sphere he was a speechwriter for William Pitt and Henry Dundas’ political manager in Scotland; from 1804 he was Comptroller of Taxes for Scotland. In the religious sphere he was active in modernising the Church of Scotland. In the journalistic sphere he was responsible for the periodicals *The Mirror*, 1779-1780, and *The Lounger*, 1785-1787, and for *The Letters of Brutus*, open letters to leading political figures written over a period of years. In the cultural sphere he was a founder of Edinburgh’s Royal Society, 1783, and of the Highland and Agricultural Society, 1784; he also worked to ensure the publication of a Gaelic dictionary. In the literary sphere he was a successful author, whose 1771 *The Man of Feeling* was the best selling novel of the decade; he helped promote Burns and Byron’s poetry and Scott’s novels.⁵⁹⁷ In the theatrical realm he was a successful playwright and helped develop the Scottish theatre. Henry Cockburn wrote of him as one of old Edinburgh who had survived to see a new scene and who accommodated himself to the revolution in manners:

⁵⁹⁵ Henry Mackenzie, 1745-1831.

⁵⁹⁶ Walter Scott christened Mackenzie thus in the dedication to his 1814 *Waverley*: “Our Scottish Addison, Henry Mackenzie, by an unknown admirer of his genius.” (1986: 340)

⁵⁹⁷ It was in the 9/12/1786 *Lounger* that Mackenzie wrote the first important consideration of Burns, calling him ‘the heaven-taught ploughman’. He was involved in the first Burns Supper, of which Cockburn wrote: “a public dinner in honour of Burns (22nd February 1819). There were about two or three hundred present ... By far the most interesting part of the proceedings were the few words spoken by Henry Mackenzie, who had been kind to the poet on his first visit to Edinburgh about thirty years before, and who was often rewarded by witnessing the glory of the genius which he had so early discerned and cherished.” (1971: 356) Mackenzie’s admiration for Burns was returned, with Burns calling him ‘the first of men’ and claiming that he had worn out two copies of *The Man of Feeling*.

with the cheerfulness of a man of sense, above the weakness of supposing that the world must have been in its prime only when he was in his. The title of 'The Man of Feeling' adhered to him ever after the publication of that novel; and it was a good example of the difference there sometimes is between a man and his work. Strangers used to fancy that he must be some pensive sentimental Harley; where he was far better - a hard-headed practical man, as full of worldly wisdom as most of his characters are devoid of it...⁵⁹⁸

Scotland's future was in the Union and so Scottish identity had to accommodate British circumstances without losing what made her distinct. While he appreciated the benefits commercial advance had brought, he thought there was much of value in traditional Scottish society which was being lost: "the habits of industry have now superseded the amusement of listening to the legendary narrative or heroic ballad..."⁵⁹⁹ He argued that wealth and virtue were not synonymous: "The Tribute paid to Grandeur or Wealth is ever in an inverse Proportion to the Virtue of a People. Commercial Nations like ours are peculiarly subject to it from the sudden Influx of Riches to which they are liable..."⁶⁰⁰ Luxury could corrupt men's values and take them away from a virtuous life. He did not object to men being rich but he did object to them neglecting public duties. I will assess Mackenzie's concept of political responsibility through an examination of both his fiction and journalism.⁶⁰¹

1. Fiction

Mackenzie's first two novels, the 1771 *The Man of Feeling* and the 1773 *The Man of the World*, share common themes: the insincerity of city, especially London, life; the corrupting potential of luxury and ease; the love of money over virtue; the unsuitable education of the elite; the selfishness of men in commercial society. *The Man of*

⁵⁹⁸ 1971: 265.

⁵⁹⁹ 1805: 12.

⁶⁰⁰ From a 1773 letter to his cousin Elizabeth Rose of Kilravock in Mackenzie 1967b: 137/138.

⁶⁰¹ The main works used here will be: *The Letters of Brutus* (Mackenzie MDCCXCI); *Report of the Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland* (Mackenzie 1805); *The Man of the World* (Mackenzie 1815); *The Man of Feeling* (Mackenzie 1967a); *Letters to Elizabeth Rose of Kilravock* (Mackenzie 1967b); *Anecdotes and Egotisms* (Mackenzie 1996); *Julia de Roubigne* (Mackenzie 1999). Editions of his *Mirror* and *Lounger* will be referred to individually.

Feeling, his first novel, related the life of Harley, the eponymous hero: he went to London to obtain the lease on some Crown lands; he was lonely there; he returned home; he fell in love with an heiress but was too shy to tell her; he died.⁶⁰² Mackenzie wrote that he conceived of the novel as having little plot or incidence (a point critics could easily make), being “merely a sketch of some particulars of the life and sentiments of a man of more than usual sensibility...”⁶⁰³ In it he celebrated the refined qualities which made men better companions and increased their sociableness; he criticised the corruption which resulted from an over-attention to riches and threatened to destabilise society.

Harley was an innocent with no ambitions for wealth or power and wondered, when in London, if “that in the British code there was some disqualifying statute against any citizen who should be convicted of modesty.”⁶⁰⁴ Mackenzie was concerned that men’s values had been corrupted and that they no longer knew what true virtue was: “not only is virtue declined, and vice prevailing, but ... the praises of virtue are forgotten...”⁶⁰⁵ He criticised the members of ‘polite’ society: “You have substituted the shadow Honour; instead of the substance Virtue ... Truth, the most amiable, as well as the most natural of virtues, you are at pains to eradicate. Your very nurseries are seminaries of falsehood...”⁶⁰⁶ The love of virtue had been replaced by the love of money. Carmichael, Hutcheson, Ferguson and Smith had all been concerned with the transference of the idea of perfection from personality to possessions and Mackenzie

⁶⁰² The novel was a tremendous success. The first edition appeared in April 1771 and sold out in three months; a second edition appeared in August, with many more following. The novel contains much weeping and an ‘Index to Tears’ first appeared in the 1886 edition. In the 2001 edition (98 pages long) incidents or descriptions of weeping appear on pages: 5; 8; 12; 15 (3 separate incidents); 26 (3 separate incidents); 27 (4 separate incidents); 38 (3 separate incidents); 41 (2 separate incidents); 48 (2 separate incidents); 50 (2 separate incidents); 51 (3 separate incidents); 55 (2 separate incidents); 65; 67 (2 separate incidents); 69; 70; 71 (2 separate incidents); 72; 73 (2 separate incidents); 74 (2 separate incidents); 75 (2 separate incidents); 78; 84; 90; 95; 96; 97. In total, there are 47 references to crying.

⁶⁰³ 1996: 186. He wrote that he had the idea for the book when studying law in London and that it was partly autobiographical, “a real picture of my London adventures.” (Ibid.: 190) He spent three years there – 1765-1768 – before returning to Edinburgh because like Harley, he claimed, he disliked living alone in the big city and missed his family. It is difficult to believe this given his reputation as a social man. And, given his extraordinary career, his claim to be unambitious is even harder to believe. He disingenuously argues; “tho’ I missed probably wealth and rank, I found comfort and content...” (Ibid.)

⁶⁰⁴ 1967a: 14.

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid.: 83.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid.: 39.

shared this concern. He used Harley to criticise the idolisation of wealth over personal qualities:

he began to ruminate on the folly of mankind, who affixed those ideas of superiority to riches, which reduced the minds of men, by nature equal with the more fortunate, to that sort of servility which he felt in his own.⁶⁰⁷

He discussed the education of the elite, which taught them nothing useful. A young man, once out in the world, had no ideas “but those of improving his dress in Paris”; a young woman was taught that she were a creature to be married.⁶⁰⁸ These were the effects of luxury, inevitable perhaps in a modern commercial state but damaging to both individuals and their society:

did its votaries keep it in their own sphere of thoughtless dissipation, we might despise them without emotion; but the frivolous pursuits of pleasure are mingled with the most important concerns of the state; and public enterprise shall sleep till he who should guide its operation has decided his bets at Newmarket, or fulfilled his engagement with a favourite-mistress in the country.⁶⁰⁹

The increase in luxury had corrupted the elite, distracting those who should have been active in the political sphere. They pursued pleasure at the cost of public duty: “The immense riches acquired by individuals have erected a standard of ambition, destructive of private morals, and of public virtue.”⁶¹⁰ This ambition was not a noble one, that of being of service to the state, but an ignoble one of personal comfort. The elite thought less and less of themselves as members of a community with a duty to others. Mackenzie valued sociableness highly and worried that luxury made men concentrate too much on themselves and too little on others.

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid.: 23/24.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid.: 40.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid.: 41.

⁶¹⁰ Ibid.: 82.

He expressed similar concerns in his second novel, the 1773 *The Man of the World*. The plot of this unremittingly depressing (but unintentionally funny) work is more complicated and centres around the Annesley family. In Part One Richard, the father of the family, rejects money in favour of a virtuous life and is consequently disinherited by his rich father for entering the Church. He is married to Harriet Wilkins who displays the 'female virtues', "those inferior sweetnesss which acquire the general esteem: sincere, benevolent, inoffensive and unassuming."⁶¹¹ Her father is a wealthy tradesman who would rather see his daughter married to a good man than a rich one and Mackenzie's comment on this echoes Smith's notion of commercial virtues: "Liberal minds will delight in extending the empire of virtue, for my own part, I am happy to believe, that it is possible for an attorney to be honest, and a tradesman to think like Wilkins."⁶¹² Harriet dies in childbirth, leaving Richard to raise their two children, William and Harriet. Mackenzie's description of them displays his gendered notion of virtue and appropriate behaviour: William resents any vicious behaviour "and wished to be a man, that he might ... gird on his sword of sharpness, and revenge the wrongs of the sufferer"; Harriet, by contrast, is gentle and timid and "trembled for the danger to which she imagined him exposed..."⁶¹³ However, Richard does teach his daughter to value herself: "Be accustomed, my love, to think respectfully of yourself; it is the error of the gay world to place your sex in a situation somewhat unworthy of a reasonable creature..."⁶¹⁴

Before his son sets off for university, Richard gathers his children for a homily, warning them that pleasure had to be subservient to virtue and duty, and of the dangers of 'the gay world'. In particular he warns of the false idea of politeness, demonstrating Mackenzie's concerns with luxury and ease corrupting morals: "Politeness taught as an art is ridiculous: as an expression of liberal sentiment and courteous manners, it is truly valuable."⁶¹⁵ Richard's children are polite in the valuable sense but at this point Mackenzie introduces a character for whom it is an art: Sir Thomas Sindall, the eponymous 'man of the world'. He is an example of the

⁶¹¹ 1815: 10.

⁶¹² Ibid.: 13.

⁶¹³ Ibid.: 17/18.

⁶¹⁴ Ibid.: 30.

⁶¹⁵ Ibid.: 34.

idle rich too corrupted to serve their state, as the ease his money allows has prevented “the usefulness of which he might have been to society.”⁶¹⁶ The plot thickens here as Sir Thomas ruins both brother and sister: he lures William into a life of crime for which he is eventually transported; he drugs and ‘takes advantage’ of Harriet, who falls pregnant. The novel descends into sheer potboiling style at this point: Sir Thomas abandons Harriet, refusing to marry her; she runs away to have her baby; her father dies of a broken heart; Harriet’s nurse disappears with the baby; Harriet dies of a broken heart. In general, things were not well with the Annesley family – father and daughter dead, son transported and granddaughter missing, feared dead. This is all the work of Sir Thomas and the authorial voice asserts that if ever he is poor, friendless or sick he will not despair: “If such shall ever be my lot, so let me alleviate its sorrows; let me creep to my bed of straw in peace, after blessing God that I am not a Man of the World.”⁶¹⁷

Part Two picks up the action twenty years later with Sir Thomas and his two wards, Lucy and Henry. Henry’s virtue is contrasted with Sir Thomas’ immorality: he has “a winning softness of deportment ... a disposition instinctively benevolent, and an exquisite sensibility of heart.”⁶¹⁸ Henry spends time in London and, like Harley, finds it a cold place, too concerned with “the unmeaning profusions of ceremony and politeness”: “He looked for that cordial friendship, that warm attachment which is only to be found in the smaller circles of private life, which is lost in the bustle of extended connection of large societies.”⁶¹⁹ Henry loves Lucy and wants to marry her; Sir Thomas intends to ‘take advantage’ of her too. At this point, we near our melodramatic climax as Sir Thomas takes Lucy to a remote country house to ravish her; Henry follows them and, with an old soldier he has met on the road, arrives to find Lucy held by two servants as Sir Thomas screams “Damn your pity, rascals, carry her to bed by force!”⁶²⁰ At this dramatic juncture, Henry, Sir Thomas and the soldier fight and a woman appears from nowhere to stun all into silence by declaring: “I hope you have not been a-bed with that young lady!’ She waited not a reply. ‘For

⁶¹⁶ Ibid.: 38.

⁶¹⁷ Ibid.: 162.

⁶¹⁸ Ibid.: 167.

⁶¹⁹ Ibid.: 191.

⁶²⁰ Ibid.: 268.

as sure as there is a God in heaven, she is your daughter!’”⁶²¹ Yes, Lucy (through a complicated set of circumstances) turns out to be Harriet and Sir Thomas’ daughter; the identity of the old soldier is also revealed – he is William Annesley. Sir Thomas, who has been stabbed in the fight, dies a repentant man, with his last breath intoning “mine has been called a life of pleasure; had I breath I could tell you how false the title is; alas! I knew not how to live.”⁶²²

Although very silly at points, the novels raised issues that were of concern to the Scottish Enlightenment. The appropriate education and behaviour of the elite was a perennial concern: Sir Thomas had the opportunity to be educated and to serve his state but served only his own selfish interest, rejecting public duty for private pleasure. Commercial society could make men inconsiderate and self-obsessed: Sir Thomas was a profoundly unsociable man who thought of others only in relation to himself and was too self-interested to consider the needs of others. The novel was an, admittedly melodramatic, warning about the selfish, individualistic ethos of ‘polite’ society, where men cared more for wealth than virtue, more for possessions than people.

Mackenzie’s third and last novel, the 1777 *Julia de Roubigne*, is his best and most interesting. It is less concerned with the effects of luxury and ease on the virtuous citizen and more concerned with the damaging effects of excessive sensibility. However, he was concerned with both for the same reason – the threat to sociableness. *Julia* is the story of a young woman who marries a man she does not love because he has paid her father’s debts, even though he expects nothing from her and she is in love with someone else. It is an epistolary novel, told in the letters of Julia, her love Savillon, her friend Maria, her husband Montauban and his friend Segarva. Mackenzie is sometimes lazily categorised as a member of the Sentimental School but his works should be seen as a critique of sentimentalism and the over-indulgence of passion and feeling. As noted earlier, there is a perceived ‘two Smiths’ problem; there is also a perceived ‘two Mackenzies’ problem. There is Mackenzie the ‘sentimental’ novelist; there is also Mackenzie the moral essayist who

⁶²¹ Ibid.: 269.

⁶²² Ibid.: 284.

condemned sentimental novels. I would argue that there is no such problem - *Julia* is a pastiche and critique of the sentimental novel. As Susan Manning argues, *Julia* offers an "extended and reflective consideration of sensibility..."⁶²³ She argues that it is ironic that Mackenzie has been identified with his weepy Harley, given that his work "is less an endorsement than a sceptical inquiry into the conditions and effects of sentiment on human behaviour."⁶²⁴

In an essay for the *Lounger* he argued that novels which illustrated the manners of mankind deserved a higher status than they were generally assigned. However, the novel had become so popular that anyone and everyone was writing one and "men of genius and knowledge" had retired from the field in disgust, with the result of debasing the literary merits of most novels and aiding in "its perversion from a moral or instructive purpose to one directly the reverse."⁶²⁵ Novels could corrupt by forming "a mistaken system of morality", in relation to "that war of duties which is to be found in many of them, particularly that species called the *Sentimental*."⁶²⁶ This was the responsibility of the French: in their most celebrated novels there were always clashes of virtue and duty and in these, "those are always likely to be preferred which in truth and reason are subordinate, and those to be degraded which ought to be paramount."⁶²⁷ Duty to one's parents was contrasted with ties of friendship and love; the virtues of justice, prudence and economy placed in competition with generosity, benevolence and compassion. In such novels, "the overstrained delicacy of the persons represented always leads them to act from the motive least obvious and therefore the least reasonable."⁶²⁸ This could easily stand as criticism of *Julia* and lends credence to the argument that Mackenzie was critiquing the sentimental novel, with a story where all the characters were naturally virtuous and calamities arose from an excess of sensibility and an over-dependence on the dictates of emotion.

⁶²³ 'Introduction', pp.vii-xxvi in Mackenzie 1999: vii.

⁶²⁴ *Ibid.*: ix.

⁶²⁵ *Lounger* No. 20, 18/6/1785 in Mackenzie MDCCCIV Vol. 1: 169/170.

⁶²⁶ *Ibid.*: 171. Italics in original.

⁶²⁷ *Ibid.*: 172.

⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*

This excess of sensibility and over-dependence on the dictates of emotion is clearly demonstrated in *Julia*. In his introduction, Mackenzie writes that he received the letters from a French friend and left them pretty much as they were, “because they are made up of sentiment, which narrative would destroy.”⁶²⁹ Narrative implies reason and order, two qualities Mackenzie puts at odds with the sentimental. In the novel, Julia’s mother tells her that her mind is too tender and she needs to be more controlled: “You must learn to conquer some of its feeling, if you would be just to yourself ... they [emotions] must not be indulged too far; they poison the quiet of our lives.”⁶³⁰ Her mother, who is dying, leaves a letter for her speaking the language of prudence: “She, for whose use it was written, has need of such a monitor, and would listen to no other; if she has paid debt to prudence, it was not from the obligation of wisdom, but the impulse of feeling.”⁶³¹ Julia ignores her mother and rejects her sensible advice; she also ignores the advice of friends. Maria counsels her that if she cannot be with Savillon she should try and forget about him but, though Julia sees the sense of this, she disregards it: “There is reason in all this; but while you argue from reason, I must decide from my feelings.”⁶³² Smith had written of the importance of sociableness, arguing that there was rarely a mind so disturbed that a friend’s company could not restore some sense of balance; he argued that society and conversation were the most powerful remedies to restore tranquility, as well as the best preservatives of “that equal and happy temper, which is so necessary to self-satisfaction and enjoyment.”⁶³³ The epistolary style of the novel underlines the central characters’ lack of society and conversation. Although Julia and Montauban’s correspondents give good advice they are ignored and Julia and Montauban are in conversation only with themselves.

While *Julia* is primarily concerned with sensibility, there is also criticism of modern commercial society and the decline of virtue. Montauban flees Paris because “vice and folly predominate so much, that a search after their opposites is beyond the

⁶²⁹ 1999: 5.

⁶³⁰ Ibid.: 44.

⁶³¹ Ibid.: 79.

⁶³² Ibid.: 57.

⁶³³ 2000: 25.

limits of ordinary endurance...”⁶³⁴ This echoes earlier criticism of London. Mackenzie argued that cities, with their individualist ethos and opportunities for sin, were not conducive to virtue as “we increase the sense of virtue in ourselves, by consciousness of virtue in others.”⁶³⁵ Savillon shares these opinions, writing that polite city life warped the character: “I must unlearn feelings in which I have long been accustomed to delight: I must accommodate sentiments to conveniency, pride to interest, and sometimes virtue itself to fashion.”⁶³⁶

In conclusion, Mackenzie’s novels critiqued both modern commercial society and sensibility. *The Man of Feeling* argued that although to be ‘sensitive’ was no bad thing, an excess of it could isolate men and prevent them living full lives. It was not a critique of sensibility in the way *Julia* was, but did warn of the consequences of being too ruled by your emotions. *The Man of the World* warned of the dangers of an excessively individualistic ethos, of seeing fellow creatures not as beings with moral worth but as instruments for one’s own pleasure. He argued that literature could serve a moral purpose by displaying the positive and negative aspects of society and human behaviour; it could also serve as a moral corrective by illustrating virtuous behaviour. These were themes he also examined in his journalism.

2. Journalism

In his *Mirror*, *Lounger* and *Letters of Brutus*, as in his novels, Mackenzie was concerned with the dissemination of virtue in modern commercial society. Crucial to this was social intercourse: virtue was a social characteristic just as man was a social animal. In *Julia* he had argued ‘we increase the sense of virtue in ourselves, by consciousness of virtue in others’; when he started the *Mirror* it was with the stated aim of holding a mirror up to nature and society and reflecting what was virtuous and what was vicious. This was inspired by Smith’s argument that society was man’s

⁶³⁴ 1999: 21.

⁶³⁵ Ibid.

⁶³⁶ Ibid.: 92.

guide to correct behaviour: "Bring him into society, and he is immediately provided with the mirror which he wanted before."⁶³⁷ This would be the goal of all Mackenzie's journalism and he warned that the boundaries between virtue and vice could not be too rigorously maintained. Ferguson had sought to salvage old values and adapt them to new times, preserving the civic in the times of civility. Smith had praised newer, commercial values while attempting to inculcate a sense of community and responsibility. Mackenzie's work would display aspects of both.

Mackenzie argued that while there was much to enjoy in modern commercial society there were also dangers. Refinement and delicacy of taste were the products of advanced society and allowed elegant enjoyment but "they may be pushed to a dangerous extreme."⁶³⁸ They could lead to an excess of sensibility and spoil their possessors for the ordinary enjoyment of life. He illustrated this with the tale of 'John Homespun' and his family, who were simple, honourable country folk, his two girls healthy and sensible until spending a month in London. They returned pale, crammed into ridiculous clothes, lay in bed all day and criticised their home and family as vulgar. John despaired: "As certain great cities, I have heard, are never free from the plague, and at last come to look on it as nothing terrible or extraordinary; so, I suppose, in London ... this disease always prevails, and is but little dreaded."⁶³⁹ Things were different in the country where simple good manners and virtue still survived. However, their existence was under threat and if the 'polite' way of life spread, "it will not only embitter our lives, and spoil our domestic happiness ... but in its most violent stages, will bring our estates to market, our daughters to ruin, and our sons to the gallows."⁶⁴⁰ This, of course, was what had happened to the Annesley family.

⁶³⁷ 2000, Part 3, Chapter 1: 162. In 1778 an Edinburgh club, originally known as The Feast of the Tabernacles but better known as the Mirror Club, decided to publish a series of papers on morals, manners and taste. This periodical, the *Mirror*, was published bi-weekly from 23/1/1779 to 27/5/1780. Mackenzie was the editor and main contributor of this periodical and its successor, the *Lounger*. William Creech, the publisher, offered Mackenzie £100 to publish the *Mirror* in book form; Mackenzie rejected the offer until Creech increased it to £180. He gave £100 to charity and £80 to the Mirror Club to pay for good claret.

⁶³⁸ Mirror No. 10, 27/2/1779 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 1: 64.

⁶³⁹ Mirror No. 12, 6/3/1779 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 1: 87.

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid.

John expected to find Edinburgh as corrupted as London but was pleasantly surprised to find there politeness in the proper sense of the word, as an expression of liberal sentiment and courteous manners. In his novels Mackenzie had warned against big cities like London and Paris and these strictures were repeated in his non-fiction. He warned soldiers to be wary: it was not conceivable “that the idle and dissipated society of London could fit a man for bearing the duties of a general, or bearing the hardships of a soldier.”⁶⁴¹ Politicians too should be careful: “In the society of dissipation, a young man risks more than his money; he stakes his feelings, his principles, his sense of private virtue, and of public duty.”⁶⁴² Cities like Paris corrupted and Mackenzie wrote of men of fashion returning from there as “pale emaciated figures ... in their dress and look resembling monkies rather than human creatures.”⁶⁴³ He argued that country life taught simple manners and encouraged virtuous behaviour and that it was a shame that the elite were unable to resist the showier charms of London, with all “the seductions of a luxurious capital.”⁶⁴⁴ He was not arguing for retirement from the world and living in isolation but that the elite should spend their time in the city attending to public duty not private pleasure. When their duty was done they should return to the country, where there was:

a certain purity of mind and imagination which its scenes inspire, a simplicity, a colouring of nature on the objects around us, which correct the artifice and interestedness of the world.⁶⁴⁵

When Mackenzie discussed the corrupting effects of ‘polite’ society on men, it was mainly elite men to whom he was referring. However, he did discuss the condition of the lower orders. He argued they were shaped by their employments, “fixed in habits of industry by the iron hand of necessity.”⁶⁴⁶ This made them inferior not only to more educated men but also to ‘noble savages’. He wrote of the indigenous peoples of America (Indians, as he had it) who could speak on their nation’s affairs “with a spirit, a force, and an energy, that might do honour to a European orator”; who could

⁶⁴¹ Letter 1, to Lieutenant General B-----, 16/4/1790 in Mackenzie MDCCXCI: 3.

⁶⁴² Letter 2, to R. B. S-----, 3/5/1790 in Mackenzie MDCCXCI: 11.

⁶⁴³ Mirror No. 4, 6/2/1779 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 1: 24.

⁶⁴⁴ Mirror No. 104, 6/5/1780 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 3: 262.

⁶⁴⁵ Lounger No. 87, 30/9/1786 in Mackenzie MDCCCIV Vol. 3: 162.

⁶⁴⁶ Mirror No. 15, 16/3/1779 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 1: 107.

defend their nation; who had a tolerance for hardship and suffering that was admirable.⁶⁴⁷ Such men were far better than Scotland and England's lower orders:

How superior such a being to one occupied, day after day, in turning the head of a pin, or forming the shape of a button, and possessing not one idea beyond the business in which he is immediately employed.⁶⁴⁸

Although the lower orders were not his primary concern he thought their condition deserved some consideration. He regretted that the rules of good breeding did not apply to the lower orders, that a man might be esteemed as amongst the best-bred while ill-treating his servants. Carmichael, Hutcheson, Ferguson and Smith had argued that respect had to be earned; Mackenzie concurred. He criticised 'great men' who were rude to the little people, citing the example of Lord Eldon, who had ignored a small favour requested of him:

He should know that tho' he is a great man who is elevated above his fellows, and whom they approach with awe and reverence, yet he is a still greater man who allows them to approach him without fear of degradation, who wins their affection and obedience by gentleness and conciliating manners. Such conduct is like the bending of a majestic oak, which adds to its beauty, and does not diminish its grandeur.⁶⁴⁹

Mackenzie wished to see some respect extended to the lower orders by their superiors, "the external shew of humanity..."⁶⁵⁰ Arguably, therefore, if the lower orders were the servants of the state, the state would be judged by how it treated them:

When we employ them in the labour of life, it ought to be our study to demand that labour in the manner easiest to them; and we should never forget, that gentleness is part of the wages we owe them for their service.⁶⁵¹

⁶⁴⁷ Mirror No. 18, 27/3/1779 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 1: 131/132.

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid.: 132.

⁶⁴⁹ 1996: 114.

⁶⁵⁰ Mirror No. 29, 4/5/1779 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 1: 214.

⁶⁵¹ Mirror No. 26, 24/4/1779 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 1: 195.

Mackenzie, like Ferguson, suggested that the condition of the lower orders was regrettable but devoted no serious time to it. He argued that just as it was a politician's duty to give most of his attention to "the encouragement and regulation of those members of the community who contribute most to the strength and permanency of the state", so it was a moral writer's duty to use his talents "to regulate and correct the affections of the mind, which, when carried to excess, often obscure the most deserving characters ...[who] are seldom or never to be found among the worthless."⁶⁵² The members of the community who contributed most, in his opinion, were the elite, too many of whom were distracted by trifles and drawn away from public life. He criticised personal and political laziness, arguing that the higher the rank "the more urgent is the necessity for storing the mind with the principles, and directing their passions to the practice, of public and private virtue."⁶⁵³ Like Ferguson, he argued that one of the great purposes of education was to form the citizen and make men useful to society and compared men of fashion introduced to the world at the earliest opportunity with men properly educated:

In place of having their minds stored with the bright examples of antiquity, or those of modern times, the first knowledge they acquire is of the vices with which they are surrounded; and they learn what mankind are, without ever knowing what they should be.⁶⁵⁴

Just as Ferguson (and to some degree Hutcheson) had argued that it was the elite who deserved pity for their lethargic and listless lives, not the lower orders degraded by the division of labour, so Mackenzie argued that it was more important to improve the condition of the elite: "Nothing is perhaps so difficult as to find out business proper for the idle: and, though it may appear paradoxical, yet I believe none have so much need of it as they."⁶⁵⁵

⁶⁵² Mirror No. 39, 8/6/1779 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 2: 20.

⁶⁵³ Mirror No. 15, 16/3/1779 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 1: 108.

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid.: 112.

⁶⁵⁵ Lounger No. 1, 5/2/1785 in Mackenzie MDCCCIV Vol. 1:1.

Mackenzie's concern with the elite's condition led him to devote considerable time to notions of political responsibility. The elite should be occupied with public duties but too often these were "the constrained employments to which accident or education has devoted their hours, while their willing moments are destined, perhaps, to light amusements and to careless mirth."⁶⁵⁶ While such pastimes might be more enjoyable, the elite had a duty to the public and part of that duty was the use, not abuse, of their skills, as argued in a letter to William Pitt: "The talents and virtues of a Minister are the right, the property of the people; I call upon you, in the name of the people, for their exercise and use."⁶⁵⁷ It was not the possession but the exercise of talents that made a man respected; those who had the benefit of a good education but chose not to use it, or misapplied their talents, deserved no indulgence. While Mackenzie had similar arguments to Ferguson on several points, he differed on the talents and virtues needed for government, positioning himself closer to Smith. In an argument also reminiscent of Carmichael and Hutcheson, he argued that it would be a fine thing "if in public men and public assemblies, the more solid qualities of knowledge, virtue, and prudence, were allowed a superiority..."⁶⁵⁸ He argued that government ministers needed skills such as industry, attention and economy, more akin to Smith's new commercial virtues than Ferguson's warlike ones. Mackenzie argued against a militia, describing the agitations of the 1750s and 1760s as:

a measure which many most patriotic as well as sensible men in Scotland thought very inexpedient at that time (1759), when, after the confusion and disturbance occasioned by the Rebellion of 1745, the country was beginning to get into habits of industry and good agriculture.⁶⁵⁹

Mackenzie, like Smith but unlike Ferguson, did not think you had to fight for your country to serve her. A strong economy was just as important as a courageous population, if not more so. He believed that while courage was important it was necessary only in some and that a Standing Army was a more effective form of defence: "Constitutional courage is the lot of some men of strong nerves. The

⁶⁵⁶ Mirror No. 93, 28 /4/1780 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 3: 146.

⁶⁵⁷ Letter 8, to the Right Hon. W. P---, 17/1/1791 in Mackenzie MDCCXCI: 57.

⁶⁵⁸ Letter 7, to R. B. S-----, Esq., 5/1/1791 in Mackenzie MDCCXCI: 50.

⁶⁵⁹ 1996: 109.

courage of habit is acquired in service.”⁶⁶⁰ Ferguson had written of Scotland’s proud martial past to instil a sense of pride in contemporary Scots; Mackenzie distanced himself from this past. He wrote that in dealing with uncivilised or half civilised nations, like the Malays, gentleness and a conciliating manner were necessary to win their friendship. He went on to argue that the Highlanders, though more civilised and polished, had the same sort of temper and would not be managed by rough usage or angry words and needed to be handled gently. This could be seen as a plea for toleration of a culture that had formerly opposed the British state; more likely is that Mackenzie was trying to stress the ‘otherness’ of the Highlanders. He wrote of them as a separate race, emphasising the difference between the half civilised Highlands and the polished Lowlands.⁶⁶¹

Mackenzie’s appreciation of the less warlike virtues was demonstrated by his attitude to, and treatment of, women. Women were one of the intended audiences of the *Mirror* and the *Lounger* and he wrote (referring to himself in the third person), “that he addresses many of his papers chiefly to the ladies, and feels a high degree of pleasure when he is told that anyone of them has been lucky enough to interest or to please the fair part of his Readers.”⁶⁶² He believed that women needed to be educated and displayed a clear interest in the subject. He corresponded for many years with his cousin, Elizabeth Rose of Kilravock (herself an educated and literate woman) and praised women writers: “Your sex is certainly very high in the Republic of Letters at this very Era. Mrs McAuley in History, Mrs Montague in Criticism, Mrs Brooke in Novel ... are inferior to few...”⁶⁶³ He noted with pleasure the explosion in writing by, and for, women:

⁶⁶⁰ Ibid.: 233.

⁶⁶¹ He did have respect for Highland landed society and argued it was their control of the ‘Highland Army’ which accounted for its good behaviour: “Never was an army in better discipline as far as regarded pillaging or oppressing the inhabitants than the Highland army in the ’45, rabble as they were.” (1996: 23) In 1776 Mackenzie had married Peniel Grant, the daughter of a chief of a great Highland clan, Sir Ludovick Grant of Grant.

⁶⁶² *Mirror* No. 89, 14/3/1780 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 3: 118.

⁶⁶³ 1967b: 70.

The rising Generation of Females should certainly have their Minds more improved & their Manners more regulated than their Mothers, if Precept will effect it; for I have observed many more Lessons for their Life published within these few Years past than any Era of equal Length...⁶⁶⁴

However, he did not believe that women were as capable of intelligence as men, as can be seen from his novels and some of his throwaway comments. In *The Man of the World* he had written of the female virtues, "those inferior sweetnesses..."⁶⁶⁵ In the *Anecdotes and Egotisms* he wondered: "Why are Draughts called in French le jeu de dames? Is it because the game requires less thought than Chess and therefore is thought fitter for ladies?"⁶⁶⁶ He also had a gendered notion of virtue, echoing Smith's active and passive virtues: "the same applause which we involuntarily bestow upon honour, courage, and spirit in men, we naturally confer upon chastity, modesty, and gentleness in women."⁶⁶⁷ This gendered notion is most clearly demonstrated in his discussion of old age. An elderly woman has "many little female occupations" which make it easier for her to be alone.⁶⁶⁸ He continued: "The comparatively unimportant employments of the female world, which require neither much vigour of body nor much exertion of soul, occupy her hours", and stop her from getting bored, a problem for men who were used to being busy.⁶⁶⁹ He continued:

The negative and gentler virtues which characterise female worth, suit themselves more easily to the languid and suffering state of age or infirmity, than those active and spirit-stirring qualities which frequently constitute the excellence of the male character.⁶⁷⁰

Mackenzie argued for the improvement of women's minds and manners not as a good in itself but for the instrumental benefits: women could help to civilise their men and make their lives easier. The education Mackenzie had in mind was not one that would encourage curiosity and independence; instead, he praised Dr John

⁶⁶⁴ Ibid.: 169.

⁶⁶⁵ 1815: 10.

⁶⁶⁶ 1996: 84.

⁶⁶⁷ Mirror No. 30, 8/5/1779 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 1: 221.

⁶⁶⁸ Lounger No. 72, 17/6/1786 in Mackenzie MDCCIV Vol. 3: 27.

⁶⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁰ Ibid.

Gregory's work for encouraging appropriate behaviour.⁶⁷¹ Gregory's 1774 *A Father's Legacy to His Daughters* was one in a series of 'conduct manuals' which detailed how women should behave, echoing the generally accepted belief that it was the proper duty of women to make themselves pleasing to men.⁶⁷² Gregory advised women to hide any intellect they might have: "But you happen to have any learning, keep it a profound secret, especially from the men..."⁶⁷³ Men did not like intelligent women, nor did they like women who were in any way forward or bold. As both a sop and a warning his readers were told how men treated 'good' women: "we are conscious of a natural title you have to our protection and good offices, and therefore we feel an additional obligation of honour to serve you..."⁶⁷⁴ While Mary Wollstonecraft would question the necessity "that the behaviour of the whole sex should be modulated to please fools", Mackenzie recommended it as suitable reading for his educated, literate cousin.⁶⁷⁵ Of Gregory's *Legacy* he wrote:

I liked it extremely as the natural & unstudied Sentiment of a worthy & delicate Mind ... there is rather too much of an artificial sort of Decorum recommended in it. That is perhaps the safest Side to err on...⁶⁷⁶

In *Julia*, he had Julia's mother echo the advice of conduct manuals, as she recommended that her daughter be always sweet and affectionate to her husband and pay attention to his interests. Pleasing him should be her main goal and she should not expect marriage to be romantic bliss. He used the tale of Susana Gold to further discuss marriage, employing it as a metaphor for society. Like Ferguson's women, Gold did not look abroad and devoted herself to her family: "I go little abroad, attend to nothing so much as the oeconomy of our family, am as obliging as possible to all

⁶⁷¹ Dr John Gregory, 1724-1773, medic, academic and author. He was Professor of Medicine at Aberdeen 1756-1764; Professor of Physic at the University of Edinburgh 1766-1773.

⁶⁷² Other such works included Dr James Fordyce's 1765 *Sermons to Young Women*. Richard Sheridan, in his 1775 *The Rivals*, has Lydia Languish scoop *The Man of Feeling* out of her aunt's sight, leaving Fordyce's *Sermons* open in its place. Fordyce, 1720-1796, Scottish Presbyterian minister and author, whose other works include: *The character and conduct of the female sex*, 1776; *Addresses to Young Men*, 1777.

⁶⁷³ 'A Father's Legacy to His Daughters', pp.44-53 in Jones (ed.) 1990: 46.

⁶⁷⁴ *Ibid.*: 48.

⁶⁷⁵ 1992: 201.

⁶⁷⁶ 1967b: 157.

my husband's friends, and study in every way to be a kind and dutifull wife."⁶⁷⁷ Despite this, her husband was constantly critical and ignored her opinions, thinking her too keen to have her own way: "She is so much attached to her own opinions in every trifle, so impatient of contradiction in them, and withal so ready to dispute mine..."⁶⁷⁸ Mackenzie considered the problem, which in his opinion was a lack of respect for each other, and argued that it was important to attend to these 'lesser' virtues because they were necessary for social intercourse. While we can see that he classed the virtues traditionally associated with women – conciliation and consideration for others – as lesser virtues, he did value them. Smith, of course, had made similar arguments about the importance of the social virtues. Individuals needed to be more tolerant of each other in an expanding, commercial society that brought them ever closer together. A striking aspect of Mackenzie's advice to Gold was that he did not advise her to yield to her husband. He believed women could be intelligent, though not as intelligent as men, but argued they needed to express themselves in another way – in a different voice, as Gilligan might have it:

It is not from the possession of knowledge, but from the display of it, that a woman ceases to be feminine. To lecture with authority, to argue with violence, to dispute with obstinacy, are qualifications purely masculine.⁶⁷⁹

He criticised London women who, not content with adopting "the masculine air, and the manly garb", were making inroads into public oratory with at least six societies where women could go before an audience "and canvass all manner of subjects with the freedom and spirit of the boldest male orators."⁶⁸⁰ He counselled women to be quiet and discreet in the expression of any opinion: "Let a woman's understanding be ever so strong, let her mind be ever so accomplished, it should always be delivered *solto-vocc*."⁶⁸¹

⁶⁷⁷ Mirror No. 33, 18/5/1779 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 1: 242.

⁶⁷⁸ Ibid.: 246.

⁶⁷⁹ Mirror No. 89, 14/3/1780 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 3: 119.

⁶⁸⁰ Mirror No. 102, 29/4/1780 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 3: 248

⁶⁸¹ Mirror No. 89, 14/3/1780 in Mackenzie MDCCLXXXIII Vol. 3: 120. Italics in original.

In conclusion, Mackenzie's arguments displayed aspects of both Ferguson and Smith's work. Ferguson had advocated political re-education for the elite; Smith primary education for the lower orders; Mackenzie a sociable education that taught men to live with one another. Ferguson had patronised or demonised the feminine; Smith and Mackenzie both argued that women had worth and could display virtue, albeit of a lesser kind. He shared Ferguson's concern about elite political participation; he also shared Smith's concern for the lower orders, as can be demonstrated by his admonition to Burke over their treatment in his work:

The distresses of the lower orders of the people, the want of food, of cloathing, of fuel, are not calculated to figure in painting and sculpture, to melt in poetry, or to rouse in eloquence. These orders, however, are what political and philosophical truth must own to be the nation.⁶⁸²

Unlike Smith, however, he did not suggest any means of amelioration. He shared Smith's appreciation for the new, gentler social values and accepted that society was changing from a martial to a commercial one. He worried, as had Ferguson and Smith, that commercial society could isolate men, impacting on their capacity to interact successfully. Ferguson's solution had been a citizen militia to remind men of their duty and of their interdependent relationship. Mackenzie rejected this, gently mocking such institutions: "Militia, or train-band subalterns, believe me, who having neither seen service nor good company, contrive to look fierce, in order to avoid looking sheepish."⁶⁸³ For Smith and Mackenzie the solution lay not in a militia but in stimulating sociability: commercial society could make men selfish and to be a responsible citizen was not necessarily to fight for your country but to consider others' feelings.

⁶⁸² Letter 6, to the Right Honourable E. B----, 22/11/1790 in Mackenzie MDCCXCI: 42.

⁶⁸³ Lounger No. 4, 26/2/1785 in Mackenzie MDCCCIV Vol. 1: 25.

Chapter Eight: Walter Scott

I have previously assessed elements of Walter Scott's work: his contribution to the demonisation of the Stuarts, in particular James VI/I, with his *Secret History of the Court of James the First*; his contribution to the creation and characterisation of Highland and Scottish identity through his *Tales of a Grandfather*.⁶⁸⁴ In this Chapter I shall assess his contribution to contemporary debates on political responsibility and national identity through his historical fiction. As argued in the introduction to this Part, political responsibility can be applied to the behaviour expected of nations as well as of individuals and we can see in Scott's work a consideration of both. Although he was involved in the political, economic and social affairs of his time, he is best remembered for his historical novels, which are a rich source of information for any examination of changing notions of society and citizenship, the use and abuse of Scottish history and the creation of a British political identity.⁶⁸⁵

As Claire Lamont argues, using recent events in Scottish history and examining their causes and consequences allowed him to reflect on the evolving nature of Scottish society and was very much in the spirit of the Scottish Enlightenment: "His predecessors here were not the novelists but the historians, the eighteenth-century Scottish 'philosophical' historians who had theorised on the development of societies."⁶⁸⁶ It is generally agreed that *Waverley* is the first historical novel, as Lamont summarises:

⁶⁸⁴ Walter Scott, 1771-1832, poet, novelist and lawyer. He grew up in Edinburgh's newly built and fashionable George Square, considered one of the finest of the Edinburgh Georgian squares: "until the University of this century [twentieth] destroyed three-quarters of it, leaving the Scott house in a sad remnant of its original setting." (P. H. Scott 1981: 51) Trained as a lawyer, he was admitted to the Faculty of Advocates in 1792 and was appointed a Principal Clerk of the Session in 1806. He published several volumes of poetry between 1805 and 1817, refusing the Laureate in 1813. He later turned to novels.

⁶⁸⁵ Scott produced, anonymously, 27 novels, including: *Waverley*, 1814; *The Antiquary*, 1816; *Rob Roy*, 1817; *Ivanhoe*, 1819; *Redgauntlet*, 1824; *Chronicles of the Canongate*, 1827. He did not publicly admit authorship until 1827 (in person at an Edinburgh dinner, in print in his introduction to the *Chronicles*). His novels were hugely popular and made him a very rich man: P. H. Scott estimates they earned him roughly £10,000 a year, an enormous amount. Morton (1930: 17) reports that Scott's advance for the *Chronicles* was £11,400. A farm worker of the time would be paid about £2 a month; Scott's own salary of £300 a year as Sheriff of Selkirkshire was considered enough to allow a gentleman to live comfortably.

⁶⁸⁶ 'Introduction', pp.vii-xx in Scott 1986: xv.

His characters have not only parents, but also ancestors. They are men and women for whom the present is unavoidably conditioned by the past, and whose actions will cause repercussions in the future. It is these qualities in *Waverley* that have gained it the title, the first historical novel.⁶⁸⁷

Henry Cockburn wrote of Scott: "A genius now appeared, who has immortalized Edinburgh, and will long delight the world."⁶⁸⁸ However, in the twentieth century his work became less fashionable: as P. H. Scott argues, "Scott was widely regarded as boring at best and reactionary at worst."⁶⁸⁹ P. H. Scott writes of Scott's reclamation by George Lukács, who saw his novels demonstrating changing social and economic conditions through the lives of his characters: "You might almost say that for Lukács Scott was the first, and one of the greatest, of Marxist writers."⁶⁹⁰ He notes that this is not surprising since many of both Scott and Marx's ideas were shaped by the Scottish Enlightenment:

The idea of history as a progression from one stage of social and economic development to another was one of the principal themes of eighteenth century Edinburgh. The ideas of Scott and Marx were nourished by the same source.⁶⁹¹

Scott and Marx shared ideological influences to a degree but from these they formed different worldviews. That P. H. Scott uses Lukács to interpret Scott's work is odd, as he insists that Scott has to be understood in his correct context – "Scott, more than almost any other writer, cannot be properly understood without an awareness of the historical position in which he found himself in Scotland, because that is the theme of most of his best work" – and Lukács demonstrated not only a poor understanding of Scott but also a complete lack of knowledge of the Scottish Enlightenment.⁶⁹² *The Historical Novel* had no references to the Scottish Enlightenment and when discussing the work of Adam Smith and Sir James Steuart referred to them in an

⁶⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁸ 1971: 211.

⁶⁸⁹ 1981: 3.

⁶⁹⁰ Ibid. Lukács' argument was laid out in his 1937 *The Historical Novel*, the English translation of which first appeared in 1962. The edition referred to here is the 1989 edition.

⁶⁹¹ Ibid.

⁶⁹² Ibid.: x/xi.

English context, which is inaccurate, ill-informed and inappropriate, particularly in relation to the Jacobite Steuart.⁶⁹³ When he discussed the German Enlightenment he wrote that it followed in the wake “of that of France and England”, arguing of its protagonists as “standing on the shoulders of their English and French predecessors...”⁶⁹⁴ This is again inaccurate and ill-informed, completely ignoring the work of men such as Hutcheson, Ferguson and Smith in shaping the thought of the German Enlightenment. He was equally misguided and inaccurate about Scott, writing of the historical novel, as exemplified by Scott’s work, arising in England; of Scott’s “pride in English history”; that Scott was “an English petty aristocratic...”⁶⁹⁵ This conflation of Scottish and English identity is, sadly, not uncommon; however, it does reflect a similar conflation in Scott’s work.⁶⁹⁶

Scott, in his *Tales*, wrote that nothing had happened in Scotland after 1745 to make it worthwhile continuing the narrative. He argued that the ’45, although it brought much individual suffering, ended feudal tyranny and civil war and assimilated Scotland to England. Since then Scotland had seen her condition improve and commerce increase, which brought with it “[t]he useful arts, agriculture, navigation, and all the aids which natural philosophy affords to industry...”⁶⁹⁷ The advantages of the Union, he argued, were obvious and from George III’s accession in 1760, “the beneficial effects of this great national treaty were generally felt and recognised.”⁶⁹⁸ He wrote of it as a ‘national’ treaty, not an international one, although Scotland and England were technically independent nations before 1707. After 1760, he wrote, Scotland and England grew ever closer and united in the defence and improvement of the island that was home to them both: “[t]his happy change from discord to friendship, from war to peace, and from poverty and distress to national prosperity...”⁶⁹⁹ He argued that any political events after 1745 had come out of

⁶⁹³ Sir James Steuart, 1713-1780, Jacobite and political economist. Works include *A Dissertation on the Doctrine and Principles of Money*, 1761; *An Inquiry into the Principles of Political Economy*, 1767.

⁶⁹⁴ 1989: 21; 22.

⁶⁹⁵ *Ibid.*: 54; 55.

⁶⁹⁶ The main works used here will be: *Tales of a Grandfather* (Scott 1872); *Redgauntlet* (Scott 1985); *Waverley* (Scott 1986); *The Antiquary* (Scott 1995).

⁶⁹⁷ 1872: 1104.

⁶⁹⁸ *Ibid.*: 713.

⁶⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

causes general to imperial kingdoms and were not particular to Scotland and, on this, ended the book, thus clearly conflating Scottish and English history.

1. Scott and Scottish history

Colin Kidd argues that “Scott aimed to complete the Union by educating the English nation in Scottish history...”⁷⁰⁰ However, he also aimed to re-educate his fellow countrymen. Arthur Herman has argued that Scott’s reaction to social change was to preserve what was valuable of the past, that he “salvaged what he could from the incoming time of progress, without vainly trying to hold the waters back.”⁷⁰¹ He went on to argue that Scott created a more forward-looking Scottish identity than had Macpherson with Ossian:

unlike Ossian’s mythic past, which ‘breathed old age and decay’, it was essentially hopeful about the future, even if the old ways were fading away. The lesson that Scott taught the modern world was that the past does not have to die or vanish: it can live on, in a nation’s memory, and help nourish its posterity.⁷⁰²

Herman is among those who argue that Scott diffuses Scottish history. However, I would argue that he sanitised it and used it to create a new, Unionist political identity. He romanticised the past, ignored contemporary issues such as the clearances and emigration, and used neutered Highland symbols to create a British identity for modern Scots. He saw history as a resource and took elements of clanship, patriarchal attachment and military prowess from Highland life. The visible manifestation of this was Scott’s stage-management of George IV’s 1822 visit to Edinburgh.⁷⁰³ This was the first visit of a reigning monarch since the time of Charles II – since when there had been a Union and two Rebellions – and this royal visit was seen as a symbol of official forgiveness. Scott gave the Highlanders a prominent part

⁷⁰⁰ 1993: 266.

⁷⁰¹ 2003: 279.

⁷⁰² Ibid.: 304.

⁷⁰³ George IV, 1762-1830, monarch from 1820 but Regent from 1811. Scott, made a Baronet in 1820, was a friend of George IV and had attended his Coronation.

in the festivities, with 'traditional' Highland games, and appropriated tartan as a Scottish, not just Highland, badge of identity.⁷⁰⁴ George IV himself appeared in a kilt, utilising this former symbol of resistance and difference as part of a shared British identity. The recently rediscovered Scottish Royal Regalia were also brought out, yet another example of Scottish symbols being used to create a British identity.⁷⁰⁵

P. H. Scott argues that with both his writing and deeds Scott "achieved the internal reconciliation within Scotland between Highlander and Lowlander."⁷⁰⁶ However, I would argue that he appropriated and emasculated Highland culture and heritage to suit his political master. Devine has written how the later eighteenth-century saw a reassertion of Scottish identity in the Union through the development of a cult of tartanry. As any political assertion of Scottish national identity could undermine the union relationship on which Scott believed economic success depended, there was, instead, a cultural assertion. The Highlands had been neutered and "Highlandism therefore answered the emotional need for a distinctive Scottish identity without in any way compromising the union."⁷⁰⁷ Highland symbols were appropriated to create a unionist Scottish identity and Scott strip-mined Highland and Scottish history to provide the materials for a new Anglo-Scottish political and national identity.

⁷⁰⁴ It is important to note that items that are traditionally seen as ancient symbols of Highland and/or Scottish identity rarely are. The bagpipes were developed after 1707; the kilt in the form we now know it was invented in the 1720s by an English Quaker, Thomas Rawlinson. He believed the belted plaid – a sort of cloak, usually brown or russet – which was worn by many Highlanders was unsuitable gear for the workmen at his Invergarry blast furnace and designed a shortened version. By 1746 it was considered as part of traditional Highland dress and so was banned. Tartan, in its current form, owes much to Scott, who invented many of the patterns for George's visit. Typically, 'authentic' patterns were very basic with a limited palate but new technology and dyes allowed him to create a much wider range. Scott was an original member and one of the first vice-presidents of the Celtic Society (founded in 1820), which promoted the use of this 'ancient' dress.

⁷⁰⁵ Scott had exerted himself to find the long-lost Regalia and they were discovered in a locked box in a locked room at Edinburgh Castle on 4/2/1818; in the September of that year Adam Ferguson (the son of Adam Ferguson of Part Two, Chapter 4), a close friend of Scott's, was inducted into the newly created office of Keeper of the Regalia.

⁷⁰⁶ 1981: 192.

⁷⁰⁷ Devine 2003: 354.

After George's visit, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* wrote: "Scotland has long been a calm, quiet, happy and improving country ... A loftier and wiser people are not to be found now upon the earth, nor do the records of any such survive."⁷⁰⁸ This was part of a process to rewrite Scottish history, to neutralise the rougher, less 'civilised', parts and to use an excessively romanticised imagery of the Highlands to create a communal Scottish identity. Highland and Lowland culture were being merged to create a Unionist Scottish identity. This Unionist Scottish identity would be part of a larger British identity and Scott sought to make the Scottish past acceptable to the English. Unpleasant realities were ignored, uncomfortable truths softened and Highland martial values adapted to serve a common cause. As Christopher Whatley argues:

In a sleight-of-hand process which had preceded 1820 and which would carry on well into the nineteenth century, the Scottish past was turned into an 'ideologically neutral pageant', a transition which had its visual counterpart in the erection of towers and monuments that celebrated and turned into common property figures like William Wallace and Robert Burns...⁷⁰⁹

David Daiches has argued that Scott "believed in progress, rationality, moderation, reconciliation. The prime use of history was to help us improve ourselves."⁷¹⁰ However, Scott saw improvement as adaption to Unionist values and aimed to give Scots a sense of national identity that was confined within the limits of the Union. The national identity he helped to create was not that of bloody, miserable feudal life but a softer, romantic and chivalrous past. While embracing a Unionist future and accepting material progress, as he had, Scots could be proud of what they once were. As Nicholas Phillipson argues, he encouraged them to think of traditional ways of life with affection but this would be "a source of consolation for the apparent vicissitudes of the present rather than an excuse to impede the forces of material progress in the name of a narrow and defensive nationalism."⁷¹¹

⁷⁰⁸ 1822: 255.

⁷⁰⁹ 2000: 329.

⁷¹⁰ 'Scott and Scotland', pp.38-60 in Bell (ed.) 1987: 40.

⁷¹¹ 'Scott as Story-Teller: An Essay in Psychobiology', pp.87-100 in Bell (ed.) 1987: 89.

2. Scott's 'fictitious' Scotland

Scott's contributions to the contemporary debate on political responsibility and national identity are best illustrated by reference to his works. I have chosen to focus on three of his historical novels: *The Antiquary*, *Waverley* and *Redgauntlet*. *The Antiquary*, a tremendously popular work which went through ten editions in Scott's lifetime, deals with contesting views of Scottish history and addresses issues, previously considered in this Thesis, such as the militia and Ossian. *Waverley* was Scott's first novel, which located our fictional 'hero', Edward Waverley, in the events of the '45. *Redgauntlet* was Scott's final study of the Jacobite past and, set in 1765, it posits the return of Charles Stuart to Scotland. I have used *Waverley* and *Redgauntlet* as they are set, respectively, in 1745 and 1765, and consider the changes in Scottish society from these times to the beginning of the nineteenth century, a time period directly relevant to this Thesis.⁷¹²

Just as Ossian had been used in the militia agitations, Scott used a discussion of the militia in *The Antiquary* to introduce the topic of Ossian. He considered the question of Ossian's authenticity and through this consideration delineated the differences between Highlanders and Lowlanders, emphasising the otherness of the Highlanders. Ossian, with its romantic and sentimental portrayal of Scottish history, had appealed to Scott in his youth but he later came to believe it a fraud. Although it is likely that he was convinced by arguments against it being 'genuine', I agree with William Ferguson's attribution of this change of heart partly to Scott wishing to please his English audience:

In part it was because of the Highland Society's Ossian Report ... which seemed to cast considerable doubt on the authenticity of Macpherson's *Poems of Ossian*. Scott went with the tide, keen not to strike an anti-English or anti-unionist note.⁷¹³

⁷¹² In *Rob Roy*, Scott's sixth novel, an Englishman found himself caught up in the '15. Rob Roy is a very minor character in the novel but Scott used his name to cash in on the contemporary fascination for him. Mackenzie noted that Rob Roy's name was used in many tales: it was "a name that ... like that of the great romantic hero of romantic writing, King Arthur, might be used without any good historical authority." (1996: 225)

⁷¹³ 1998: 313.

Scott was a keen supporter of the militia and has Oldbuck, the antiquary of the title, approvingly cite Ferguson's *Sister Peg*: "didst thou ever read the history of Sister Margaret, which flowed from a head, that, though now old and somedeale grey, has more sense and political intelligence than you find now-a-days in a whole synod?"⁷¹⁴ Scott, like Ferguson, saw his passion for a militia as patriotic in both a Scottish and a British sense. A militia would not arm potential rebels but defend the British state, in co-operation with a Standing Army.⁷¹⁵ Oldbuck has a conversation with Captain Hector MacIntyre, his nephew, who mocks the militia: "like many of his profession [he] looked down with infinite scorn on these citizen soldiers ... [and observed] that to see an old gouty shopkeeper attempting the exercises and duties of a private soldier, was really too ridiculous."⁷¹⁶ Oldbuck, with some dignity, defends these 'citizen soldiers':

it may possibly be so ... but at present the country resembles the suitors in a small-debt court, who plead themselves for want of money to retain counsel as our people must fight in person, for lack of cash to retain enough of your professed heroes of the sword. I am sure in the one case we never regret the acuteness and eloquence of the lawyers; and so, I hope, in the other, we may manage to make shift with our hearts and muskets, though we shall lack some of the discipline of your martinets.⁷¹⁷

Oldbuck discusses Ossian with Hector, a soldier and a Highlander, when considering the correct spirit to motivate men to fight. Oldbuck argues that after a long march camp should be made by a hero's tomb; Hector contends it would be better to camp by a poultry yard. Oldbuck laments: "No wonder the days of Cressy and Agincourt are no more, when respect for ancient valour has died away in the breasts of the British soldiery."⁷¹⁸ Hector replies by assuring him that there is still respect for ancient valour: "we are by no means insensible to the memory of our fathers' fame; I

⁷¹⁴ 1995: 46.

⁷¹⁵ This was not only a theoretical passion. Scott took an active part when militia and volunteer forces were organised in Edinburgh. As Cockburn noted: "Walter Scott's zeal in the cause was very curious. He was the soul of the Edinburgh troop of Midlothian Yeomanry Cavalry. It was not a duty with him, or a necessity, or a pastime, but an absolute passion, indulgence in which gratified his feudal taste for war, and his jovial sociableness. He drilled, and drank, and made songs, with a hearty conscientious earnestness which inspired or shamed everybody within the attraction." (1971: 195)

⁷¹⁶ 1995: 297.

⁷¹⁷ Ibid.

⁷¹⁸ Ibid.: 243.

used often ... to get old Rory MacAlpine to sing us songs out of Ossian about the battles of Fingal...”⁷¹⁹ Oldbuck has cited English, not Scottish, victories and put the debate in a British context; Hector replies by citing Scottish victories and separating English and Scottish history. The ‘we’ he speaks of is not the British army but the Scottish regiment he is part of. Oldbuck is roused by this and is contemptuous of both Ossian and Hector: “did you absolutely believe that stuff of Macpherson’s to be really ancient, you simple boy?”⁷²⁰ Hector argues that he has heard these songs from infancy but Oldbuck challenges him again: “not the same as Macpherson’s English Ossian – you’re not absurd enough to say that, I hope?”⁷²¹ Hector holds his ground and the narrator’s voice intervenes:

like many a sturdy Celt, he imagined the honour of his country and native language connected with the authenticity of these popular poems, and would have fought knee-deep, or forfeited land and life, rather than give up a line of them.⁷²²

This is reminiscent of many ‘a sturdy Celt’ who fought for Charles Stuart, forfeiting land and life, and argues for the triviality of the poems and the decline of a particular Scottish nationalism. Where passion might once have been directed to opposing the British state, it is now channelled into literary clashes. Instead of fighting for a lost king, Scots fight over ‘lost’ poems. This gently ridicules those who still opposed the Union and reassured the English that while the Scots might still be contrary, it was over far less important issues.⁷²³

⁷¹⁹ Ibid.

⁷²⁰ Ibid.

⁷²¹ Ibid.

⁷²² Ibid.

⁷²³ Scott’s distrust of Macpherson’s Ossian is evident in the novel. For example, when Oldbuck asks Hector to quote some verses of Ossian, Hector replies with a poem on a dialogue between Ossian and Saint Patrick of Ireland: “Patrick the psalm-singer,/Since you will not listen to one of my stories,/Though you never heard it before,/I am sorry to tell you/You are little better than an ass.” “Good! good!” exclaimed the Antiquary, “but go on. Why, this is, after all, the most admirable fooling – I dare say the poet was very right. What says the Saint?” (Ibid.: 244/245) Hector tells him that Patrick replies: “Upon my word, son of Fingal,/While I am warbling the psalms,/The clamour of your old women’s tales/Disturbs my devotional exercises.” “Excellent! – why, this is better and better. I hope Saint Patrick sung better than Blattergow’s precentor, or it would be hang-choice between the poet and the psalmist. But what I admire is the courtesy of these two eminent persons towards each other. It is a pity there should not be a word of this in Macpherson’s translation.” “If you are sure of that,” said MacIntyre, gravely, “he must have taken very unwarrantable liberties with his original.” “It will go near to be thought so shortly...” (Ibid.: 245) In another instance, when Hector is offered the

Hector and Oldbuck then move the debate onto ancestry, with Hector commenting that it was unreasonable of Oldbuck to be angry with him for “admiring the antiquities of my own country more than those of the Harolds, Harfagers, and Hacos you are so fond of.”⁷²⁴ Oldbuck replies that “these mighty and unconquered Goths” are Hector’s ancestors too, not just the ancient Celts he claims: “the bare-breeched Celts whom they subdued, and suffered only to exist, like a fearful people, in the crevices of the rock, were but their Mancipia and Serfs!”⁷²⁵ This serves to impress on us that the English and Scots have some common ancestry and that the Highlanders are a lesser line. Hector, who symbolises the Highlanders, is described as a wild young boy with little malice but equally little self-control. There are references to his “warlike tones” and “the frankness of Highland congratulation...”⁷²⁶ Highlanders are portrayed as childlike. Out walking one day, Oldbuck is trying to have a serious conversation with Hector, who is easily distracted and runs off when he sees a seal: “a Highlander could never pass a deer, a seal, or a salmon, where there was the possibility of having a trial with them...”⁷²⁷ They were clearly inferior to the more civilised, or anglicised, Lowland Scots, a point Scott went on to stress in *Waverley* and *Redgauntlet*.

Waverley is the tale of Edward Waverley, a Scot raised in England who gets caught up in the '45. An important character is Fergus Mac-Ivor Vich Ian Vohr, the chieftain of a Highland clan. Edward, who has been anglicised, symbolises modern Scotland, having to come to terms with the past and learning to grow up. Fergus is the uncivilised Scotland that cannot move forward, his otherness and unEnglishness emphasised by his ‘foreign’ name. Fergus persuades Edward, an officer in the British army, to join the Jacobite cause. Edward fights against the Hanoverian army before eventually rejecting Jacobitism and embracing a peaceful life. Edward’s rejection of violence is a metaphor for Scotland’s renunciation of Jacobite cause: “The plumed troops and the big war used to enchant me in poetry, but the night marches, vigils,

gift of horses by a local nobleman, Oldbuck answers for him: “Hector is a pedestrian, and never mounts on horseback in battle – he is a Highland soldier, moreover, and his dress ill adapted for cavalry service. Even Macpherson never mounted his ancestors on horseback...” (Ibid.: 288)

⁷²⁴ Ibid.: 244.

⁷²⁵ Ibid.

⁷²⁶ Ibid.: 334; 335/336.

⁷²⁷ Ibid.: 246.

couches under the winter sky, and such accompaniments of the glorious trade, are not at all to my taste in practice..."⁷²⁸ Edward had accepted that 'real life' must start:

he felt himself entitled to say firmly, though perhaps with a sigh, that the romance of his life was ended, and that its real history had now commenced.⁷²⁹

This echoes Scott's portrayal of Scottish history; the independent past was romantic but over and real history had begun with the Union and resulting commercial development, with which Scotland had matured as a nation. Scott portrayed the events of the '45 as a temporary madness, as demonstrated by *Redgauntlet*, the story of two friends, Alan and Darsie, who get caught up in a fictitious 1765 Jacobite plot. The romanticism of the cause "might well be supposed to seduce young and enthusiastic minds ... although wisdom and reason frowned upon the enterprise."⁷³⁰ In *Waverley*, Edward is seduced but sees sense; Fergus fights until the end and never grows up. In one of his last comments to Edward he displays no regret for the loss of life, merely for the end of the game: "Our fine adventure is now totally ruined..."⁷³¹

With his portrayal of Edward and Fergus, Scott stressed that there were two Scotlands, the civilised, anglicised Lowlands and the uncivilised, foreign Highlands. The Highlanders were strangers to Lowland behaviour and customs and "gazed with all the admiration of ignorance upon the most ordinary productions of domestic art..."⁷³² He emphasised the otherness of the Highlanders even in his positive comments, such as: "there are few nations ... that can boast of so much natural politeness as the Highlanders..."⁷³³ Such comments also distinguished the nation that had rebelled against the British from the loyal, trustworthy nation that had been invaded. He stressed that the Highlanders were not only different from the English but from Lowlanders:

⁷²⁸ 1986: 290/291.

⁷²⁹ Ibid.: 283.

⁷³⁰ 1985: 3.

⁷³¹ 1986: 275.

⁷³² Ibid.: 214.

⁷³³ Ibid.: 144.

So little was the condition of the Highlands known ... that the character and appearance of their population ... conveyed to the south country Lowlanders as much surprise as if an invasion of African negroes, or Esquimaux Indians, had issued forth from the northern mountains of their own native country.⁷³⁴

He reinforces this by illustrating Edward's lack of identification with his fellow Jacobites and their "uncouth and unknown language..."⁷³⁵ The English characters also recognise the difference, as demonstrated by English officer Major Talbot's comments on the Highlanders: "what business have they to come where people wear breeches and speak an intelligible language..."⁷³⁶

John Sutherland highlights an interesting aspect of Edward's behaviour in his 'How much English blood (if any) does Waverley spill?'⁷³⁷ Scott had written to a friend that Edward was "a sneaking piece of imbecility" and Sutherland notes that as far as can be made out from the narrative, "he wanders through the battlefields of the great 1745 Rebellion offering as little danger to his English foe as a dormouse in a tiger's cage."⁷³⁸ At Prestonpans, he actually tries to save English officers, "apparently impeding his own sworn comrades from their business of killing Englishmen ... What on earth, one wonders, is Waverley doing on this battlefield, scurrying around trying to save enemy *officers* from being killed?"⁷³⁹ Scott's account of the battle is piecemeal and gives no particulars of Edward's activities but Charles Stuart compliments him on his bravery, with Fergus chiming in that his performance was praised by all. Fergus is portrayed as a merciless warrior and so is unlikely to be referring to Edward's moderation in saving English officers, so what has he done? We are told that the field is covered in bodies and, "[f]rom the lustre which attaches to him after the battle, we have to assume that Edward did at least a fair share of killing."⁷⁴⁰ The very pertinent question Sutherland raises is whom Edward has killed: as he argues, soldiers on a battlefield have one mission – to kill the enemy – and so

⁷³⁴ Ibid.: 214/215.

⁷³⁵ Ibid.: 221.

⁷³⁶ Ibid.: 261/262.

⁷³⁷ pp.10-13 in Sutherland 1996.

⁷³⁸ From a letter of Scott's cited in Sutherland 1996: 10; Ibid.

⁷³⁹ 1996: 11. Italics in original.

⁷⁴⁰ Ibid: 12.

Edward must have killed the king's men. Scott, Sutherland argues, must have been in a personal dilemma regarding Edward's military activity:

Scott, the serving officer, would have been nauseated by the idea of Edward's killing fellow holders of the king's commission – it would have been a treachery deeper than Judas's. Other ranks – 'erks', 'PBI' ('poor bloody infantry'), 'grunts': they have always attracted names testifying to their subhumanity – were something else altogether.⁷⁴¹

He argues that what Scott intimated by highlighting Edward's protection of English officers and gentlemen was that his killing was reserved for the English of other ranks:

those uncommissioned, unregarded, private soldiers and NCOs who have always been treated by their commissioned betters as expendable battle-fodder. In *Waverley* they are of no more account than the horses that die on the battlefield or the crows that peck at the corpses. Yes, the perceptive reader apprehends, *Waverley* did indeed spill English blood and a lot of it – but it was not blue blood. Had it been, his head might well have joined Fergus's on the pikes at Carlisle.⁷⁴²

This certainly accords with Scott's treatment of the Highlanders. Just as there was a division between Highland and Lowland, there was a division within the Jacobite cause. He noted that it was unfortunate that gentlemen had been involved in the '45 but argued it was the romantic, not the political, element that appealed. Those who

⁷⁴¹ Ibid. As noted earlier, Scott served with volunteer and militia forces. He visited Brussels and Waterloo a few months after *Waverley* was published and Sutherland writes that it was in his Edinburgh Light Cavalry uniform that he chose to be presented to the Tsar of Russia. Scott had had polio as a child and been left with a limp; Sutherland notes that the Tsar assumed this limp was due to an injury received at Waterloo and argues that Scott does not seem to have corrected his assumption. However, Scott's biographer (and son-in-law), J. G. Lockhart gives a rather different version of events. Lockhart writes that Scott "used to tell, with great effect, the circumstances of his introduction to the Emperor Alexander..." (1842: 320) He writes that Scott wore "the blue and red dress of the Selkirkshire Lieutenancy; and the Czar's first question, glancing at his lameness, was, "In what affair were you wounded?" Scott signified that he suffered from a natural infirmity; upon which the Emperor said, "I thought Lord Cathcart mentioned that you had served." Scott observed that the Earl looked a little embarrassed at this, and promptly answered, "O yes; in a certain sense I have served – that is, in the yeomanry cavalry ..." - "Under what commander?" - "Sous M. le Chevalier Rae." - "Were you ever engaged?" - "In some slight actions – such as the battle of the Cross Causeway and the affair of Moredun-Mill." - "This," says Mr Pringle of Whytbank, "was, as he saw in Lord Cathcart's face, quite sufficient, so he managed to turn the subject to some other subject." (Ibid.)

Incidentally, J. G. Lockhart was, like Adam Smith, a Snell Exhibitor, taking it up in 1808.

⁷⁴² Sutherland 1996: 13.

“espoused the cause of the gallant and handsome prince” did so not because they had grievances against the English but because he “threw himself on the mercy of his countrymen, rather like the hero of a romance than a calculating politician.”⁷⁴³ He went on to write of the difference between men of different status in the Highland army. The leading men of the clans, the chiefs and their relatives, were gentlemen, courageous and disciplined: “Finer and hardier men than these could not have been selected out of any army in Christendom...”⁷⁴⁴ However, the lower ranks, the peasants, were badly dressed and armed and are portrayed as barely human: “half naked, stunted in growth, and miserable in aspect.”⁷⁴⁵ Importantly, Scott’s commentary on these lower orders recognised that they were not necessarily there through choice, bound as they were to particular individuals or clans and hence subjects, not free men. He also criticised their chiefs for forcing them to fight and then not preparing them sufficiently for it: “Now these same Helots, though forced into the field by the arbitrary authority of the chieftains under whom they hewed wood and drew water, were, in general, very sparingly fed, ill dressed, and worse armed.”⁷⁴⁶ This argument served two purposes. The first was to remind readers that life in the Highlands was often very harsh and unpleasant. Individuals could have little or no control over their own lives and the end of the clan system had liberated many. The second was to remind readers that the vast majority of the Highland army were conscripts, that only a small minority of Scots were fighting voluntarily, an argument also made in his *Tales*.

3. Civil courage, effeminacy and women

Scott presented the Highlanders as a people apart; he also presented them as more myth than reality. He drew a distinction between contemporary Highlanders, who generally lived a wretched life, and the Highlanders of the past: “an ancient and high-spirited race, peculiar in their habits of war and of peace, brave to romance, and

⁷⁴³ 1986: 206.

⁷⁴⁴ Ibid.: 213.

⁷⁴⁵ Ibid.: 214.

⁷⁴⁶ Ibid.

exhibiting a character turning upon points more adapted to poetry than to the prose of real life.”⁷⁴⁷ Scots and Britons could be proud of having the latter as shared ancestors while welcoming the changing conditions of the former. As he noted, no European nation, “within the course of half a century, or a little more, has undergone so complete a change as this kingdom of Scotland.”⁷⁴⁸ The aftermath of the ’45 included the destruction of the patriarchal powers of Highland chiefs and, Scott assures us, the total eradication of the Jacobite cause. For him, this was an excellent thing as the Jacobite party were “averse to intermingle with the English, or adopt their customs...”⁷⁴⁹ This held Scotland back and prevented her from both becoming prosperous and extending her commerce, but this obstacle was now permanently removed and Scots could become richer and, therefore, more civilised, more like the English:

The gradual influx of wealth, and extension of commerce, have since united to render the present people of Scotland a class of beings as different from their grandfathers, as the existing English are from those of Queen Elizabeth’s time.⁷⁵⁰

The influence of the English, along with increasing commerce, had polished the Scots. It was generally accepted that higher levels of wealth in a society improved manners, making the Scots less martial and more ‘civilised’. Ferguson had argued that the population were becoming soft, neglecting martial duties; Scott agreed with Smith that different times had different values and virtues. He stressed the contemporary peacefulness of the Highlands: “the broadswords have passed into other hands; the targets are used to cover the butterchurns...”⁷⁵¹ From Ferguson this might have been a lament; from Scott it was simple recognition of changing circumstances. Conceptions of virtue had to change as society changed. Mackenzie had argued that one did not have to fight for the state to be a good citizen; Scott agreed. It was not enough to be brave and a good man needed to be socially aware. He wrote of ‘civil courage’ in *Redgauntlet*, when Darsie mocks Alan’s father, a

⁷⁴⁷ 1985: 3.

⁷⁴⁸ 1986: 340.

⁷⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁵¹ 1985: 28.

lawyer, for lacking physical courage. Alan argues that his father has courage enough to do what is right:

courage enough to defend a righteous cause with hand and purse, and to take the part of the poor man against his oppressor, without fear of the consequences to himself. This is civil courage, Darsie; and it is of little consequence to most men in this age and country, whether they possess military courage or no.⁷⁵²

One does not have to be a warrior to be a good man, indeed, many cannot be warriors. Having the courage to stand up for what is right is also important, sacrificing one's interests instead of one's life. This is not Ferguson's 'manly' virtue, being more akin to Smith's more feminine commercial virtues. Scott has an intriguing argument on effeminacy running through his novels. He argued against excessive fussiness over comfort: criticising Alan's mother for coddling him, he wrote that "care, to the verge of effeminacy, was taken to preserve him from damp beds, wet feet, and those various emergencies..."⁷⁵³ He also criticised men, like Edward, who became petulant when events turned against them. When Edward is sacked from his regiment, convinced there is a plan to disgrace him, "the idea of its having succeeded filled him with such bitter emotions, that, after various attempts to conceal them, he at length threw himself into Mac-Ivor's arms, and gave vent to tears of shame and indignation."⁷⁵⁴ However, he associated Ferguson's playful, aggressive masculinity with uncivilised values, with those who had no thought of the consequences of their actions. When Darsie's uncle allows him to dress as a man again, he counsels him:

⁷⁵² Ibid: 47.

⁷⁵³ Ibid: 269.

⁷⁵⁴ 1986: 127. This is not the only time Scott has his leading men in each other's arms. In *Redgauntlet*, Darsie has been kidnapped by his evil uncle to persuade him to sign the family fortunes over to Charles Stuart's cause and, in transit, has been disguised as a woman. Alan is looking for him; the two groups meet; Darsie falls off his horse; Alan catches him and is surprised at the fair maiden's weight. "But what was his surprise to that of Darsie's, when the hurry of the moment, and of the accident, permitted him to see that it was his friend Alan Fairford in whose arms he found himself!" (1985: 344)

I ... trust you will lay aside all effeminate thought with this feminine dress. Do not blush at having worn a disguise to which kings and heroes have been reduced. It is when female craft or female cowardice find their way into a manly bosom, that he who entertains these sentiments should take eternal shame to himself...⁷⁵⁵

The 'kings and heroes' include Charles Stuart, who started a civil war for his, and his father's, personal ambitions. 'Female craft and female cowardice' might be scornworthy to Redgauntlet, who sacrificed other's lives for his cause, but should not be to us. Such 'crafts and cowardices' included consideration for others and an awareness of the impact of our behaviour on others. They were the values of adults, not boys who refused to grow up and accept defeat. Redgauntlet and Fergus saw life as a game, with the consequence that they saw others as pawns. As Fergus sits in gaol waiting execution, he is brave to the end: "I am no boy, to sit and weep, because the luck has gone against me. I knew the stake which I raised; we played the game boldly, and the forfeit shall be paid manfully."⁷⁵⁶ However, the stake he raised was not only his own life but also those of his followers, who did not have his freedom of action. Fergus is man enough to die for his cause but not man enough to live with defeat, to accept that as the world changes so must we.⁷⁵⁷

Scott has an intriguing argument on effeminacy; he also has an intriguing view of women. They play a central role in *Waverley*, especially Flora Mac-Ivor and Rose Bradwardine. At first both women are defined by their relationship to Fergus and Edward (sister and cousin, respectively), but their positive characteristics are also stressed. Rose is described as beautiful, bright and a peacemaker. We have seen, in the discussion of James VI/I in Part One, Chapter 2: 1, that to be a peacemaker is often to be seen as behaving weakly but this was not necessarily so for Scott. Although he wrote of the romance of martial times he preferred a more comfortable, peaceful life. Through his portrayal of women we get a sense of Scott's conception of masculinity. Scott rejects traditional martial virtues and does not value men solely on their ability to fight. Ferguson had written that men were disposed to fight,

⁷⁵⁵ 1985: 367.

⁷⁵⁶ 1986: 324/325.

⁷⁵⁷ Fergus 'dies well', his last words "'God save King *James!*'" (Ibid.: 328. Italics in original)

“disposed to opposition”, and for him this was a noble and necessary quality but Scott gently satirised this view.⁷⁵⁸ For example, Flora and Rose discuss courage and Flora concludes:

For mere fighting ... I believe all men (that is, who deserve the name) are pretty much alike: there is generally more courage required to run away. They have besides, when confronted with each other, a certain instinct for strife, as we see in other male animals, such as dogs, bulls, and so forth.⁷⁵⁹

Flora is “one of the most beautiful and accomplished young ladies in this country”, but she values intelligence more.⁷⁶⁰ She and her brother are both Jacobites and while her brother is eager to recruit Edward to their cause, Flora is more cautious. Fergus is portrayed as impetuous, with no thought for the future, while Flora considers the implications of her actions and is critical of her brother:

I am not, like him, rapt by the bustle of military preparation, and the infinite detail necessary to the present undertaking, beyond consideration of the grand principles of justice and truth, on which our enterprize is grounded; and these, I am certain, can only be furthered by measures in themselves true and just. To operate upon your feelings, my dear Mr Waverley, to induce you to an irretrievable step, of which you have not considered either the justice or the danger, is, in my poor judgement, neither one nor the other.⁷⁶¹

There is also a revealing discussion of marriage in the novel. Fergus wants to marry Rose for her money and land; Edward wants to marry her because she is intelligent and kind. We can see contrasting attitudes to women here, with Fergus representing old Scotland and Highland values and Edward the new, enlightened Scotland. Old Highland culture, Scott suggests, sees women as property, to be valued for what they can bring materially. New, enlightened Scotland values women for their personalities and what they can contribute socially. This attitude would be seen in the argument that women could be a civilising influence on men. Scott’s men are impetuous while

⁷⁵⁸ 1995: 28.

⁷⁵⁹ Scott 1986: 249/250.

⁷⁶⁰ Ibid.: 71.

⁷⁶¹ Ibid.: 130.

his women counsel them and consider the consequences of actions. Women can help 'tame' and socialise men. Scott, through Flora, argues that men have a certain animal instinct for conflict that needs to be restrained. In a new polite age new polite manners were required and women could help inculcate these. The new polite age required more 'feminine', though not effeminate, behaviour.

Earlier, in Part One, Chapter 2: 2, I discussed Hume's approach to women. Scott's approach to women would differ from Hume's in two important ways. Firstly, he wrote for both a male and female audience (as indeed had Mackenzie). He did not exclude his female readers and women were frequently the intended audience for novels. Secondly, while Scott had given virtue a gender his characterisation was rather different. Hume had written of intelligence as a male virtue to which some women could aspire. Scott, in his portrayal of Flora and Rose, contrasted female intelligence with male impetuosity and prioritised intelligence. While he argued that physical bravery was a male characteristic that women did not generally possess this was not a weakness. Instead, his women were intelligent, often more so than their men, and sought to avoid conflict where possible. This behaviour was more appropriate for a civilised commercial age than naked aggression and so it seemed as if men should ape women for once. Similar attitudes had been seen in Smith's work, arguing against Ferguson's 'manly' virtues. Similar arguments were also made by various 'feminist' writers such as 'Sophia', Catharine Macaulay and Mary Wollstonecraft (whose work is examined in the Coda) but it is unexpected to find it in Scott's work, which is often portrayed as romanticising and glorifying warfare. However, while he displayed an appreciation for the softer, more civilised commercial virtues, this is not to say that Scott had a wholly positive attitude towards women. While he argued that women could be intelligent he still put them in men's service. Women's intelligence serves to counsel and civilise men, not to promote their own interests.

In conclusion, Scott shared the Scottish Enlightenment concern with political responsibility and the necessity to reconfigure citizenship for a commercial age. He worried that increasing commercialisation could damage the human character as individuals were shaped by the behaviour of others: "Society and example ... more than any other motives, master and sway the natural bent of our passions..."⁷⁶² Although he warmly welcomed the benefits commerce brought he encouraged the Scots to remember what they had once been. This was not to encourage them to return to that state: as Kathryn Sutherland argues, "Scott's Jacobite enthusiasm, a recurrent thread in the fabric of his texts, is less to be investigated as evidence of political equivocation behind a loyal Hanoverian façade than as signalling the temper of his essentially Romantic imagination."⁷⁶³ Scott encouraged his people to be proud of what they had been, to console them for what had happened, and to bring that proud and independent spirit to the service of the new national enterprise. As Whatley argues:

Jacobitism, which had divided the country in 1715 and 1745-46, was now impotent, its romanticisation having begun within a few years of the defeat of Charles Edward Stuart at Culloden. But the lost cause served as a largely mythical pool of common memory which could be and was selectively plundered to serve the needs of the British state.⁷⁶⁴

Scott certainly used Highland mythology to create a common British identity, as demonstrated by George IV's Edinburgh visit. This was done to serve the Union but also to serve Scotland. Scott sincerely believed that life was better under the commercial Union, that the Scottish people were safer and more comfortable. He fictionalised the past in order to neutralise it and to make it less real, ethereal rather than concrete. To use the metaphor of childhood, the Scottish past was a fairy tale to tell a child of a place far, far away and a long, long time ago. Once the child grows up they start to deal with reality and that reality, for Scott, was that Scotland's interests were best served by the Hanoverian state.

⁷⁶² 1986: 15.

⁷⁶³ 'Introduction', pp.vii-xxiii in Scott 1985: viii.

⁷⁶⁴ 2000: 3.

Conclusion

This Thesis considered the boundaries of citizenship. It also considered the boundaries of the Scottish Enlightenment. I argued that the Scottish Enlightenment has to be considered in a broader way than is usual, in terms of both time and material. T. M. Devine wrote of W. R. Scott's introduction of the term 'Scottish Enlightenment' in 1900 to describe the period between the 1730s and the 1790s when, he argued, there was an intellectual explosion.⁷⁶⁵ Alexander Broadie broadly agreed with these dates, defining the Scottish Enlightenment as "the extraordinary flowering of culture which took place in the six decades up to the mid-eighties of the eighteenth century."⁷⁶⁶ However, the Scottish Enlightenment was a process, not an event and we should not think of it having a defined beginning and end. As I argued in Part One, Chapter 1: 2, 'The Earlier Intellectual Tradition', there had been a continuing Scottish debate on political responsibility, as seen through the work of John Knox, George Buchanan and Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun, amongst others. In Part One, Chapter 2: 1, 'James VI/I', I illustrated how concerns around masculinity, effeminacy and the appropriate social and political behaviour were clearly evident in James VI/I's work and in the reaction and response to him both personally and as a king. Carmichael and Hutcheson are two thinkers usually omitted from standard discussions of the Scottish Enlightenment, yet their work addresses the concerns of later social and political thought; it also directly and indirectly contributed to later thinkers' understanding of social and political issues.

In terms of the breadth of material considered, I argued that it was important to note that it was not just social and political philosophy that was concerned with the problems of citizenship and political responsibility. As Devine wrote, one of the Scottish Enlightenment's distinctive features was the depth and range of the creative dynamic which spanned several areas.⁷⁶⁷ While political philosophy was obviously an important resource, intellectual curiosity was by no means confined to political and philosophical works and I utilised contemporary journalism and fiction to give a

⁷⁶⁵ 2003: 175.

⁷⁶⁶ 1990: 1.

⁷⁶⁷ 2003: 176.

fuller picture of contemporary debates. This extends the traditional boundaries of the citizenship debate as journals, poetry, plays and novels were used to reach different audiences. The literary and historical work of James Macpherson, Henry Mackenzie and Walter Scott (as well as Adam Ferguson and John Home) addressed issues surrounding political responsibility. Mackenzie's novels dealt with the problems faced by an increasingly commercial society and the need to preserve sociability. Macpherson and Scott's work, as well as dealing with these issues, illustrated how political responsibility could be applied to nations as well as individuals and groups.

The eighteenth century debate on citizenship and political responsibility was evidently coloured by civic humanist concerns. Key concepts such as luxury, corruption, masculinity and effeminacy, along with debates over a Standing Army versus a militia, appear time and again in the work of the thinkers considered. Gershom Carmichael, Francis Hutcheson, Adam Ferguson, Adam Smith, James Macpherson, Henry Mackenzie and Walter Scott were all concerned with the increasing commercialisation of society. They were concerned with luxury's potential to warp men's morals and to tempt them away from public duties. They were concerned with masculinity and effeminacy and the need to encourage and inculcate the 'correct' form of political participation. We have seen, in almost all of their works, discussions of a Standing Army versus a militia, albeit on different sides. Hutcheson, Ferguson and Scott argued in favour of a militia; Macpherson's work was used in the militia agitations; Smith and Mackenzie argued against a militia in favour of a Standing Army. However, while we can see civic humanist concerns in their work, only one of these thinkers was actually a civic humanist – Ferguson - and his reconfiguration of citizenship is, I believe, the least successful.

As noted in the Introduction, while this is primarily an interpretative work, implicit throughout was the question of how successful these thinkers' attempts to reconfigure citizenship for a commercial age were, in particular whether it was possible for Adam Ferguson to reconfigure civic humanism for this new age. On the basis of the thinkers used, I believe the answer would seem to be no. There were two central perceived problems of citizenship in eighteenth century Scotland: the elite

were disbarred and discouraged from public duties as departmentalisation and regulation set in; the lower orders were increasingly ill-educated and debased and thus posed a threat to public order. While Ferguson addressed the former problem, he largely ignored the latter and thus failed to address the problems of commercial society.

Two models of citizenship have been outlined: Ferguson's exclusive, martial citizenship and Smith's social and economic citizenship. In the Introduction, I referred to 'political persona' as a way of understanding political responsibility. Political persona has two components: political identity and political character. The former refers to the role one could or should play in civic life, the latter to the traits and circumstances that enabled one to fulfil that role. Political identity can be characterised as positive/engaged or negative/unengaged. Ferguson and Smith's concepts of citizenship can be respectively classified as 'engaged' and 'unengaged'. For Ferguson, citizenship was confined to a narrow group who, through martial and political activity, contributed to the life of the state. This was engaged in the sense that it involved *doing* something. It entailed some sacrifice – certainly of time, perhaps of life. It was 'manly' citizenship. For Smith, citizenship was broader and encompassed social and economic as well as political activity. One could be a good citizen and promote the happiness of the state by obeying the law, working hard and being nice to your neighbour. This was unengaged in the sense that it involved only *being*. No extra effort or input was required and because it was unengaged, it involved no extra rights. It was a more 'feminine' citizenship.

Carmichael and Hutcheson characterised and utilised Pufendorf's concepts of 'simple' and 'intensive' reputation, arguing that virtue was dependent not on external success but inward temper of soul. Low station or external disadvantage might affect your actions "but neither can hinder the found inward affections of heart, nor a course of action suited to our abilities."⁷⁶⁸ While some might court success and public glory, "the more glittering virtues of a prosperous fortune", "embracing cheerfully the lot appointed for us, repressing every envious motion" were as

⁷⁶⁸ Hutcheson 1989a: 133.

virtuous and pleasing to God.⁷⁶⁹ These categories can be broadly applied to Ferguson and Smith's concepts of citizenship. Ferguson's citizens could have 'intensive' reputation, as they were able to garner public glory; Smith's citizens could have 'simple' reputation as they did what they could to make society better. We can also see aspects of both 'simple' and 'intensive' reputation in each man's concept. Ferguson had written of the commercial arts, which needed "care, industry and skill": these were not the virtues of great men but "the virtues of private station", the 'simple' virtues that accorded simple reputation.⁷⁷⁰ More important to Ferguson were "superior genius, fortitude, liberality, and elevation of mind, – the virtues of those who are to rule the world", the 'intensive' virtues which earned men wider respect and admiration.⁷⁷¹ Smith had written of promoting social welfare 'by any means possible', recognising that virtue had to be proportionate with capacity. He wrote of the virtues of humanity and generosity, where generosity was more praiseworthy as it required effort but humanity was still valuable. Some were not capable of performing great acts but could contribute on a smaller scale. This perfectly accorded with Hutcheson's argument, that however small the good a man performed if his abilities were proportionally small the degree of virtue was great.

While all the thinkers and writers considered have, to a greater or lesser degree, considered political responsibility, it is most fully discussed in Ferguson and Smith's work. It is through the contrast between them that Ferguson's failure to successfully reconfigure civic humanism can best be illustrated. It is for these reasons that I focus on their work in this Conclusion. In relation to political persona, Ferguson allotted the elite a positive political role – that of soldier and statesman – due to their positive traits and circumstances. The elite, due to their education and freedom from the necessity to labour, were ideally suited to public life and should be encouraged to fulfil this role. Due to their financial independence, they were able to be disinterested and to engage with national interests. He allotted the lower orders a negative political role – economic support – because of their negative traits and circumstances. The lower orders, because of their ignorance and time and financial restraints, were

⁷⁶⁹ Ibid.: 224; 225.

⁷⁷⁰ 1792 Vol. 1: 244.

⁷⁷¹ Ibid.

unsuitable for public life. Due to their necessity to labour, they were too concerned with subsistence and personal issues to engage with issues of wider significance. While Smith had argued for education to salvage the intellectual capacity of the workers, he had not done so to enable them to understand and participate in public and political life. On the contrary, he had done so to limit their participation. He had argued that an educated populace would feel more respectable and hence were less likely to cause trouble. Within political character there were negative traits, such as ignorance, and negative circumstances, such as a lack of time or money, which had disqualified Ferguson's workers from the public sphere; they would also disqualify Smith's workers. Their role was to be economic, not political, and their education should prepare them for that role.

Although Smith allotted the lower orders an economic rather than directly political role, he is too little commended for his attitude towards them. He considered not only their behaviour but also the reasons for their behaviour. Men were shaped by their environment and badly behaved men were not necessarily immoral; rather, they were ill-educated and alienated. As Robbins argued: "He attributed drunkenness or disorderly conduct, not to viciousness, but most literally to ignorance which left no other recourse open to young men at work from their earliest years."⁷⁷² Those who approach Smith's work expecting to find a hard-hearted free-marketeer may find some support for their prejudice. However, those who approach his work with an open mind will find something quite different:

Surely the impartial reader can find in his pages little advocating a doctrinaire system of any kind. Men should be free in order to develop their capacities. Such development in a properly constituted political society would be of advantage to that society, to the world. In no sense was it a demand either for thoughtless exploitation or for conscious regimentation of the 'labourious' majority'.⁷⁷³

⁷⁷² 1961: 196/197.

⁷⁷³ Ibid.: 199.

Smith is also too little commended for his attitude to women and slaves. Although he had a gendered notion of virtue and shared contemporary attitudes to women's education, he allowed that women could be virtuous. He thought humanity, a woman's virtue, essential to public spirit and so enabled women to access economic and social citizenship. He argued that citizens of a modern commercial state needed to be more considerate of others and more modest – both 'feminine' qualities – and argued that warlike qualities were unnecessary, rejecting Ferguson's 'manly' citizenship. His criteria for citizenship – obeying the law and seeking to promote the good of society – were both achievable by women, as well as the lower orders. He also believed that women had, albeit limited, rights, as demonstrated by his remarkably modern equation of forced marriage with rape. Women were not just a social good to be given by fathers and taken by husbands but individuals capable of virtue who were entitled to the law's respect and protection. He criticised cultures that treated women as slaves and drew a parallel between the treatment of the two groups. Ferguson had also discussed the slavery of women but had done so to argue that it was 'natural' and to be preferred to the slavery of men; he went on to argue that slavery was inevitable and necessary for the creation of great states. Smith shared Carmichael and Hutcheson's opposition to slavery and agreed with Hutcheson that the institution of slavery was a sure sign of the death of sociableness. He displayed clear pity for 'those nations of heroes' enslaved by 'the refuse of the gaols of Europe'.

While there is much to commend in Smith there are, of course, criticisms to be made. While he broadened the concept of citizenship to include social and economic behaviour, he did not extend political rights. The lower orders would have no greater say in the running of the polity, no formal political contribution. In Part Two, Chapter 4: 5 I characterised Ferguson's workers as 'virtual women'. A similar parallel could be drawn in relation to Smith's lower orders. Smith had written that humanity, a woman's virtue, was easy to access while generosity, a man's virtue, involved some degree of sacrifice. Arguably, the lower orders were capable of humanity, which involved no great effort or any sacrifice, whilst only the elite were capable of generosity. This latter virtue, which involved preferring other's interests

to our own and some element of sacrifice, was surely only achievable by men with the education and opportunity to assess the nation's needs; on a practical level, it meant having something to sacrifice. Women and the workers had little of either. Smith's concept of citizenship did not include the extension of suffrage and accorded political responsibilities without the concomitant rights. He argued, in effect, for two types of citizenship: passive, which involved obeying the law and quietly getting on with your employment; active, which involved actively pursuing the good of the state and of others. While both were theoretically available to the lower orders, in practice their citizenship would be passive.

Although there are problems with Smith's model, it is far more attractive and feasible than Ferguson's. Their concerns were with different sections of society. Ferguson was concerned with the elite and argued for an exclusive, martial citizenship with the militia as a method of political re-education. Smith was more concerned with the labouring poor and argued for social and economic citizenship, for state-funded education and for the benefits of religion:

Smith's advocacy of such a programme was rooted in the perceived need to offset the social costs of the division of labour and that in particular the programme was intended not only to preserve a capacity for moral judgement, but also to support individuals in their role as citizens...⁷⁷⁴

Ferguson's militia was also intended to offset the social costs of the division of labour, but for those too rich, too comfortable and too entertained elsewhere to participate in the life of the state, not for those made stupid, ignorant and uncomprehending. He saw the elite's re-introduction to public and political life as the way to safeguard morality and virtue, while dooming the workers to continual degradation. He may not have advocated thoughtless exploitation but was prepared to excuse it, which contradicted parts of his moral theory. He had argued that man was excellent in the degree to which he loved his fellow creatures, "defective, in the degree in which he hates them, or is indifferent to their welfare."⁷⁷⁵ He flouted these

⁷⁷⁴ Skinner, Andrew S., 'Adam Smith and role of the state', pp.70-96 in Copely and Sutherland (eds.) 1995: 83.

⁷⁷⁵ 1792 Vol. 2: 41.

criteria with his disregard for those most affected by commercial advances. He had also argued: "Men naturally desire the welfare of their fellow creatures", but apparently not if they belonged to the lower orders.⁷⁷⁶ He did not recognise them as fellow creatures, instead identifying with the educated elite. As Charles Camic argued, Smith generally despaired that the good and the great did not look on their 'inferiors' as worthy of equal consideration and protection. He himself held that the same moral standards applied to all social classes.⁷⁷⁷ Like Ferguson, he argued that men naturally desired the happiness of others; unlike Ferguson, he made this one of the tenets of citizenship: "he is certainly not a good citizen who does not wish to promote, by every means in his power, the welfare of the whole society..."⁷⁷⁸

For Ferguson, to be a man was to be a citizen, to exercise one's talents in the service of the state. The citizen and the state were mutually interdependent: the citizen needed the state to allow him opportunities to exercise his civic virtue; the state needed committed, virtuous citizens to execute its wishes and commands. If the citizen withdrew, distracted by commercial concerns and conveniences, the state was weakened. It would find another way to function – departmentalisation and a Standing Army - and the citizen would find himself superseded by the bureaucratic process. Ferguson was not a slave to the past and he recognised that times had moved on, that a new society was evolving. However, he wanted to retain the devotion to the state from those who had the aptitude and the application. Smith's work dealt with the preservation of sociableness in a modern commercial state. Men were social creatures who naturally desired the well-being of others and co-operated to provide for all their needs. However, this sociableness was threatened by commercial advances. Men became increasingly isolated by economic factors and began to lose their sense of 'fellow-feeling' which was, potentially, hugely disruptive. He appreciated the benefits that commercial advance had brought while recognising the state's duty to those who had made it rich. The lower orders, who were becoming increasingly stupid, needed to be educated to preserve their moral integrity and to preserve the state, as their alienation was personally and politically dangerous. He

⁷⁷⁶ 1994: 91.

⁷⁷⁷ Camic 1983: 72/73.

⁷⁷⁸ 2000: 339.

extended the concept of citizenship to include their contribution and hence encourage all to feel a part of the state.

While neither concept of citizenship extended suffrage, Smith's model is far more attractive as Ferguson's is too exclusive, too based on values that were becoming outdated even in his time. His attempt at reconfiguring civic humanism failed to deal with the problem of the lower orders and thus failed to address the problems of commercial society. Ferguson doomed the lower orders to continual degradation and failed to recognise the potential for social instability this created. His militia would be a temporary solution to the 'problems' of the elite but would not protect the state from an increasingly oppressed, isolated and alienated underclass. Smith's model argued for their education, as an educated underclass would feel more respectable and hence more responsible. He extended citizenship to include social and economic activity and so their contribution to the state, however minimal, would be recognised and certainly made citizenship more accessible, even to women. Smith's model served both the individual and the state far better than Ferguson's. Both parties benefited: the lower orders received enough education to fend off the worst effects of the division of labour; the state had an educated work force who, hopefully, felt some loyalty and responsibility to the state which had educated them.

In this interpretation of Scottish Enlightenment social and political thought, Ferguson is an isolated figure. He fails to take account of the condition of the lower orders, thereby failing to fully address the problems of commercial society and make civic humanism relevant. Other thinkers considered – Carmichael, Hutcheson, Smith, Macpherson and Scott – appreciated that in changing times changing notions of political responsibility were necessary. Civic humanism had demonised the feminine and effeminate, a tradition Ferguson continued, but Hutcheson, Smith, Mackenzie and Scott had a more considerate and inclusive attitude towards women. While they did not extend political rights they recognised women's social contribution and expressed appreciation for the more 'female' or 'feminine' virtues. While this did not extend the political boundaries of citizenship it did extend a form of social and

economic citizenship to those traditionally excluded from the political sphere. Women writers' treatment of this issue will be considered in the Coda.

Coda: The Early 'Feminist' Tradition

As noted in the Introduction, it seems appropriate, in a Thesis that deals with citizenship, political responsibility and issues of inclusion and exclusion, to give a voice to those traditionally excluded. Although much of the well-known writing on women's emancipation dates from the nineteenth century, there had been a lively and sophisticated debate on the social creation of gender and women's political exclusion from the seventeenth century onwards. While Hutcheson and Smith had expressed surprisingly modern ideas about women's roles and rights in the eighteenth century, women were already critiquing the social creation of female and feminine identity. Although writers and thinkers such as Bathsua Makin, Mary Astell, 'Sophia', Catharine Macaulay and Mary Wollstonecraft were not Scottish, they were engaged with similar issues to the Scottish Enlightenment, such as the nature of political responsibility and appropriate social education. Carmichael, Hutcheson and Smith had argued against slavery and in Smith's work we saw parallels between the unfair and inhumane treatment of slaves and women. Such parallels were also drawn by Astell and Wollstonecraft, who wrote of women enslaved by socially created inferiority. Hutcheson argued that men's superiority was acquired, not innate; Makin, Astell, Sophia, Macaulay and Wollstonecraft also argued this but crucially joined it to an argument for fairer treatment, education and social and political rights. Their works were written "to urge or defend a pro-woman point of view which includes resistance to patriarchal values, convention, and domination..."⁷⁷⁹

As previously noted, civic humanism demonised the feminine and effeminate. Given this, it is intriguing to note how these women writers engage with concepts central to this school of thought. In Makin we see a concern with the education of the elite, elite women in this case. We also see a call for women to be educated so as to be useful to society, and thus politically responsible, a call repeated in Astell. In Sophia, Macaulay and Wollstonecraft, we see engagement with key civic humanist concepts such as masculinity and effeminacy. Like Scottish Enlightenment writers and thinkers, they sought to reconfigure these key terms; unlike them they sought to

⁷⁷⁹ Ferguson, Moira, 'Introduction', pp.1-50 in Ferguson (ed.) 1985: 27. Ferguson is the editor of a valuable anthology, *First Feminists: British Women Writers 1578-1799*.

reclaim traits classified as 'masculine' or 'manly' (such as rationality and intelligence) as universal. They argued that women could and should access these traits but that in doing so they were behaving not like men but like rational creatures. They sought to give virtue an ungendered meaning and to expand the boundaries of citizenship.

Bathsua Makin

Bathsua Makin's 1673 *An Essay to Revive the Antient Education of Gentlewomen*, addressed to the rich leisured class, argued for the necessity of educating women.⁷⁸⁰

An intriguing feature of this work is that it was clearly aimed at a female readership, indicating there was already a recognised and recognisable audience of literate women. She argued that women's inferiority was not innate but socially created by men: "Women are not such silly giddy creatures, as many proud ignorant men would make them..."⁷⁸¹ Women were socialised into certain behaviour and this socialisation was extremely powerful:

Custom, when it is inveterate, hath a mighty influence: it hath the force of nature itself. The Barbarous custom to breed Women low, is grown so general amongst us and hath prevailed so far, that it is verily believed ... that Women are not endued with such Reason, as Men; nor capable of improvement by Education, as they are.⁷⁸²

She considered likely objections to women's education - that women would abuse any education they were given; that women would be made 'ill-natured' by education; that women would become arrogant and disobey their husbands – and countered them. As regards the issue of abusing education, she argued that while men had certainly been known to do so it was idiotic to deny an individual something just in case they abused it, arguing that it was far better to teach someone to behave responsibly than to assume they would behave irresponsibly. Ferguson would later make similar arguments about the theatre during the *Douglas* controversy. He acknowledged that there were immoral plays and playwrights who abused the influence of the stage. "But I cannot admit any such abuse, as a valid argument against the Stage in general. We do not prohibit the use of food and drink, because some men abuse them to excess; nor do we forbid all relaxation from

⁷⁸⁰ Bathsua Makin, c.1600-c.1675, writer and teacher. Fluent in at least seven languages, she was tutor to Princess Elizabeth, 1635-1650, Charles I's daughter, from 1639 to 1644.

⁷⁸¹ 'An Essay to Revive the Antient Education of Gentlewomen', pp.128-142 in Ferguson (ed.) 1985: 139.

⁷⁸² *Ibid.*: 129.

business, because some unhappy persons do mischief in their sports...”⁷⁸³ As regards the issue of being ill-natured, Makin questioned whether women could be made worse by something that made men better. As regards the issue of becoming arrogant and disobedient, she argued that it was ignorance, not knowledge, that disturbed individuals and made them fractious. As we have seen, Smith would later make a similar argument about the lower orders, arguing it was their lack of education and consequent ignorance that caused them to misbehave. Addressing her women readers directly, she wrote that she expected criticism for her arguments from men, as they had created a system of female education which directly benefited themselves and hence would be resistant to any change: “I expect to meet with many Scoffes and Taunts from inconsiderate and illiterate Men, that prize their own Lusts and Pleasure more than your Profit and Content.”⁷⁸⁴ Again, Smith would later make similar arguments about divorce laws and slavery: those who had the power to change the situation were those who benefited from the unfairness and hence resistant to change, inclined “to give themselves the more indulgence.”⁷⁸⁵

Makin cited a plethora of learned women from classical, Biblical and recent European history to support her argument, that women were as capable as men of being educated, and also played the God card. Knox had cited Biblical authority, arguing that women were commanded by God to be humble, to serve and submit to their proper masters. Women, he argued, should be gentle: “a tender creature, flexible, soft and pitifull; whiche nature God hath given to her...”⁷⁸⁶ Makin would also appeal to Biblical authority: “Had God intended Women onely as a finer sort of Cattle, he would not have made them reasonable.”⁷⁸⁷ Carmichael would later argue against “*owning* slaves like cattle”; Makin argued that women were not animals but rational creatures who should be treated as such.⁷⁸⁸ While women would benefit personally from education through expanded understanding, their families and community would also benefit. More educated women meant a more educated

⁷⁸³ Ferguson 1757: 5/6.

⁷⁸⁴ Makin in Ferguson (ed.) 1985: 130.

⁷⁸⁵ Smith A: 147.

⁷⁸⁶ Knox B: 389.

⁷⁸⁷ Makin in Ferguson (ed.) 1985: 135.

⁷⁸⁸ Carmichael B: 144. Italics in original.

populace and as more women were educated, men would become ashamed of their ignorance and correct it. She despaired that 'women of quality', who could be useful to society, had no worthy occupations to fill their time. Just as Ferguson's elite men were driven to gambling and sport to fill their time, Makin's elite women were "forced to Cards, Dice, Playes, and frothy Romances, merely to drive away the time; whereas knowledge in Arts and Tongues would pleasantly imploy them, and upon occasion benefit others."⁷⁸⁹ If women were educated they would be more responsible and could have a positive influence on others: "Women thus instructed will be beneficial to the Nation."⁷⁹⁰ Just as Smith would appeal to the self-interest of the elite in his arguments for educating the lower orders, so Makin argued for women's education for the good of their society. It is important to note that she was not calling for general female education but for that of women from the higher orders, who had the time and money to be educated. Makin concentrated, as had Ferguson, on the education of the elite, however, unlike Ferguson, she believed women could be part of this elite.

Mary Astell

Many of Makin's concerns were also voiced by Mary Astell.⁷⁹¹ In her 1694 *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies* and 1696 *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex* she considered the intellectual and social differences between men and women and sought to account for them outwith the traditional divinely ordered or natural 'explanations'. She wrote of the power men had to order society for their benefit and argued that this male power and socialisation were responsible for the differences between the sexes, with the primary problem being one of education. Men educated themselves, denied women that privilege and then castigated them for their lack of education. She argued that, as character was formed by environment, it was little surprise that women appeared ignorant given their treatment. Dealing with the

⁷⁸⁹ Makin in Ferguson (ed.) 1985: 137.

⁷⁹⁰ Ibid.: 138.

⁷⁹¹ Mary Astell, 1666-1731. Her works include *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies, for the Advancement of their True and Greatest Interest*, 1694, which had run to four editions by 1701; *Letters Concerning the Love of God*, 1695; *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex*; 1696; *Some Reflections upon Marriage*; 1700, which ran to four editions by 1730.

question of women's ignorance, she argued that men used any means possible to 'spoil' women and to deny them the means of improvement:

So that instead of inquiring why all Women are not wise and good, we have reason to wonder that there are any so. Were the men as much neglected, and as little care taken to cultivate and improve them, perhaps they wou'd be so far from surpassing those who they now despise, that they themselves wou'd sink into the greatest stupidity and brutality.⁷⁹²

Men had argued that women were 'naturally' incapable of acting prudently but Astell countered that any such capacity was acquired, not natural, and, like Makin, argued that neither God nor nature had created women to be useless. She used the example of a young woman, taught to value herself for nothing but her appearance and told that it was wisdom enough to know how to dress to please her man. Given these circumstances, asked Astell, who could blame that young woman if her appearance was all she expended industry upon? Women were so hobbled by social creations of femininity that any man who criticised them should feel ashamed: "For a Man ought no more to value himself Wiser than a Woman, if he owes his Advantage to a better Education, and a greater means of Information, than he ought to boast of his Courage, for beating a Man, when his Hands were bound."⁷⁹³ Men had hobbled women because of their jealousy and insecurity, fearing that women might one day overtake them, and used force to subjugate them:

From that time, they have endeavour'd to train us up altogether to Ease and Ignorance; as Conquerors use to do to those they reduce by Force, that so they may disarm 'em both of Courage and Wit; and consequently make them tamely give up their liberty, and abjectly submit their necks to a slavish Yoke.⁷⁹⁴

Astell drew the parallel between women and slaves, a comparison that would later be made by Ferguson and Smith. This, she wrote, was the same the world over but could not be proved by recourse to ancient records for "the Malice of Men" had

⁷⁹² 'A Serious Proposal to the Ladies', pp.197-206 in Jones (ed.) 1990: 198.

⁷⁹³ 'An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex', pp.207-217 in Jones (ed.) 1990: 209.

⁷⁹⁴ Ibid.: 210.

conspired to suppress any records which demonstrated women's equality and claim to liberty.⁷⁹⁵ She argued that, given the repression and subjection of women, it was not unreasonable to believe that men would have destroyed or concealed "any thing that might shew the Weakness and illegality of their Title to a Power they shall exercise so arbitrarily, and are so fond of..."⁷⁹⁶

Sophia, A Person of Quality

Makin and Astell's arguments are controversial even now but would have been considered particularly radical at the time. The main themes - the social creation of femininity and the forced subjugation of women - were also articulated by 'Sophia, A Person of Quality' in her 1739 *Women not Inferior to Man*, 1740 *Women's Superior Excellence over Man* and 1751 *Beauty's Triumph: or, The Superiority of the Fair Sex Invincibly proved*.⁷⁹⁷ However, Sophia went further, arguing not only that women were not made to serve men but also that men were made for women's use. Traditional female activities, such as the bearing and rearing of children, were disparaged by men but in a peaceful, orderly state the major part of men were useless; women would never cease to be useful as they ensured society's continuation. Daniel Defoe had argued that women's main purpose was to breed, that "the great use of Women in a Community, is to supply it with Members that may be serviceable, and keep up a Succession."⁷⁹⁸ For him it was a mark of subjugation, for Sophia a mark of superiority.

Sophia argued that custom had been confused with nature, that what were thought of as inherent sexual characteristics were nothing more than social creations. Men could only see women as slaves, as vassals to serve them, with no consideration or care for how this impacted on them. Despite this, she argued, women were not merely men's

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁶ Ibid.: 210/211.

⁷⁹⁷ 'Sophia' was a pseudonym, with the pamphlets widely believed to be the work of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu.

⁷⁹⁸ 'Some Considerations upon Street-Walkers with A Proposal for lessening the Present number of them', pp.69-72 in Jones (ed.) 1990: 69. Daniel Defoe, 1660-1731, journalistic, polemical writer and novelist.

intellectual equals but their superiors as they could follow men's arguments, identify the limitations of those arguments and put forward more coherent and comprehensive explanations of their own. She criticised the argument that women had no place in politics and public life because they had no learning but, conversely, were denied any learning as they had no place in public life: "Why is learning useless to us? Because we have no share in public offices. And why have we no share in public offices? Because we have no learning."⁷⁹⁹

Sophia, when discussing women's reproductive role, reversed the standards; she did the same when discussing the terms 'effeminate' and 'manly', key concepts in civic humanism:

When they mean to stigmatise a *Man* with want of courage they call him *effeminate*, and when they would praise a *Woman* for her courage they call her *manly*. But as these, and such like expressions, are merely arbitrary, and but a fulsome compliment which the *Men* pass on themselves, they establish nothing. The real truth is, That humanity and integrity, the characteristics of our sex, make us abhor unjust slaughter, and prefer honourable peace to unjust war. And therefore, to use these expressions with propriety, when a *Man* is possess of our virtues he should be call'd effeminate by way of the highest praise of his good-nature and justice; and a *Woman* who departs from our sex by espousing the injustice and cruelty of the *Men's* nature, should be called a *Man*: that is one whom no sacred ties can bind to the observation of just treaties, and whom no blood-shed can deter from the most cruential violence and rapine.⁸⁰⁰

We have seen, in the discussion of Hume (in Part One, Chapter 2: 2) how women who behave well were commended for their 'manly' behaviour, for their cultivation of masculine virtues. Sophia objected to men's appropriation of 'positive' virtues but, instead of reclaiming them as universal, argued they were truly 'feminine' virtues. She argued that it was not women who behaved like men that should be commended, but men who behaved like women. This was truly radical, for the other writers considered here sought to reclaim as universal virtues traditionally thought of as masculine and to set an equal standard of behaviour. Sophia set unequal standards,

⁷⁹⁹ Sophia cited in Spender 1983: 78.

⁸⁰⁰ 'Woman not Inferior to Man', pp.225-231 in Jones (ed.) 1990: 230. Italics in original.

arguing that women were more moral, more humane, more just and more important than men. She applied this when considering the issue of women in the military, stating that there were no factors that prevented women from understanding and perfecting the arts of war. There was nothing mythical about war and women were capable of planning battles and organising forces – she used the examples of Bouddica, Joan of Arc and the Amazons of Scythia – but generally chose not to as it was a rather shabby and dishonourable business. “The real truth is that humanity and integrity make us abhor unjust slaughter.”⁸⁰¹ She argued that what men took as a sign of women’s inferiority, their dislike of physical confrontation, was a sign of superiority. Women did not fight because they were too humane and too adult to do so. It was only right that men should fight wars while women remained safe at home:

As sailors in a storm throw overboard their more useless lumber, so it is but fit that *men* should be exposed to the dangers and hardships of war while we remain in safety at home ... They are, generally speaking, good for little else but to be our bulwarks.⁸⁰²

Sophia’s argument is consistent with unexpected sources: Adam Ferguson and Walter Scott. Ferguson had discussed men’s innate love of conflict and their desire to prove themselves, with men loving the chance to prove themselves physically:

His sports are frequently an image of war; sweat and blood are freely expended in play; and fractures or death are often made to terminate the pastimes of idleness and festivity. He was not made to live forever, and even his love of amusement has opened a path that leads to the grave.⁸⁰³

Given this disposition it was only sensible that men fight while women are safe at home. Ferguson described primitive society where the men hunt and fight while the women labour together: “The hunter and the warrior are numbered by the matron as a part of her treasure; they are reserved for perils and trying occasions; and in the recess of public councils, in the intervals of hunting or war, are maintained by the

⁸⁰¹ Sophia cited in Spender 1983: 82.

⁸⁰² Ibid. Italics in original.

⁸⁰³ 1995: 28.

cares of the women, and loiter about in mere amusement or sloth.”⁸⁰⁴ While Ferguson intended this to demonstrate men’s superiority it is remarkably similar to Sophia’s description of men as good for the dirty work but little else. It is the men in this situation that sound like ‘a finer sort of cattle’, valued for their usefulness at dangerous or unpleasant jobs but not their intellectual capacities.

Scott, in *Waverley*, has Flora argue that men have “a certain instinct for strife, such as we see in other male animals, such as dogs, bulls, and so forth.”⁸⁰⁵ However, this is not a grand or noble characteristic and he contrasts it with Flora’s intelligence. She, like her brother, supports the ’45 but does so for more considered reasons than just a wish to fight: “I am not, like him, rapt by the bustle of military preparation, and the infinite detail necessary to the present undertaking, beyond consideration of the grand principles of justice and truth...”⁸⁰⁶ Sophia had argued that while men had a fighting instinct, this made them worse, not better than women and that women should not seek to emulate them. Instead, men should seek to emulate women who were more humane, more just and had more integrity. This was an argument seen (in adapted form) in Smith’s work: he argued that the citizens of a commercial state needed to display humanity, which he characterised a woman’s virtue.

Catharine Macaulay

More is known of Catharine Macaulay but, like Makin and Astell, she is too often ignored.⁸⁰⁷ Her 1790 *Letters on Education* has been cited as among the most significant of early feminist documents and established the parameters for

⁸⁰⁴ Ibid.: 82.

⁸⁰⁵ 1986: 250.

⁸⁰⁶ Ibid.: 130.

⁸⁰⁷ Catharine Macaulay, 1731-1791. Works include *History of England, from the Accession of James I to that of the Brunswick Line*, 1763-1783; *Loose Remarks on Certain Positions to be found in Mr. Hobbes’s ‘Philosophical Rudiments of Government and Society’*, 1767; *Observations on a Pamphlet entitled ‘Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents’*, 1770; *A Modest Plea for the Property of Copyright*, 1774; *An Address to the People of England, Scotland and Ireland on the Present Important Crisis of Affairs*, 1775; *The History of England from the Revolution to the Present Time in a Series of Letters to a Friend*, 1778; *Treatise on the Immutability of Moral Truth*, 1783; *Letters on Education: with Observations on Religious and Metaphysical Subjects*, 1790; *Observations on the Reflections of the Rt. Hon. Edmund Burke, on the Revolution in France*, 1790.

Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. Primarily a historian, her work also addressed the issues of virtue, education and the social creation of gender. In 1961 Caroline Robbins wrote of her: "There was a certain detachment and independence in her commentary that entitles Mrs Macaulay to more serious study than she normally provokes."⁸⁰⁸ However, she discussed Macaulay's looks, using her first name, a practice not adopted for the men she wrote about: "Catharine was beautiful ... [h]er appearance was striking..."⁸⁰⁹ Macaulay's gender is usually considered more important than her work, with Ralph Wardle referring to her as "the celebrated lady historian..."⁸¹⁰ More recently, Moira Ferguson also prioritised her gender, arguing that her example might have been more important than her work: "As an ardent controversialist as well as an intellectually vigorous, well-travelled, self-supporting woman, her example might well have counted for more than her feminist writings."⁸¹¹ Those who consider Macaulay as writer first and woman second are more complimentary about her work. Pocock wrote of her 1763-1781 *History of England* as "probably the principal competitor of Hume's history in the years following its appearance."⁸¹²

Macaulay outlined what had come to be accepted as the differences between the sexes and asserted that they were neither innate nor natural. Sexual inequality was entirely created by men:

all those vices and imperfections which have been generally regarded as inseparable from the female character, do not in any manner proceed from sexual causes, but are entirely the effects of situation and education.⁸¹³

Femininity was a social creation, a state worked for by men, in whose interests it was to have docile, delicate and dim women. She despaired that women played a role in their own subjugation: "How much feebleness of constitution has been acquired, by

⁸⁰⁸ 1961: 361.

⁸⁰⁹ Ibid.: 359.

⁸¹⁰ 1951: 17.

⁸¹¹ In Ferguson (ed.) 1985: 25.

⁸¹² 1999b: 256.

⁸¹³ Macaulay MDCCXC: 202.

forming a false idea of female excellence, and endeavouring, by an act, to bring Nature to the ply of our imagination.”⁸¹⁴ Men imposed concepts of appropriate behaviour and beauty and, instead of challenging them, women accepted and enforced them, believing it better to be valued for their looks than their minds:

No; suffer them to idolize their persons, to throw away their life in the pursuit of trifles, and to indulge in the gratification of the meaner passions, and they will heartily join in the sentence of their degradation.⁸¹⁵

Macaulay criticised the practice of referring to a creative, critical and competent mind as ‘masculine’, arguing that it was a practice designed to maintain the male monopoly of the intellectual realm. Women needed to learn that they too could access this realm and should value their intellectual qualities. She was an advocate of co-education, with an identical syllabus for men and women, as knowledge and virtue were not masculine traits. Women were limited both mentally and physically by the lack of education and by their environment and she urged academic studies and physical exercise for women, the equal of those for men, to prevent this limitation. Women had been deliberately degraded by men, reduced “to a state of abject slavery”, and steps should be taken to reverse this process.⁸¹⁶ Dismissing the concept of innate inferiority, she argued there was but one rule of right conduct for all rational beings, regardless of gender.

Wollstonecraft reviewed the *Letters* in November 1790, calling Macaulay a “masculine and fervid writer”, committing the very error (of referring to a creative, critical and competent mind as ‘masculine’) that Macaulay had criticised.⁸¹⁷ She praised the work, writing that it added “new lustre to Mrs M’s character as an historian and a moralist and displays ... sound reason and profound thought...”⁸¹⁸

⁸¹⁴ Ibid.: 47.

⁸¹⁵ Ibid.: 205.

⁸¹⁶ Ibid.: 206.

⁸¹⁷ ‘Contributions to the Analytical Review, 1788-1797, Vol. 8’, pp.285-331 in Todd and Butler (eds.) 1989 Vol. 7: 309.

⁸¹⁸ Ibid.: 321/322. Wollstonecraft wrote to Macaulay on the publication of her first *Vindication*, sending her a copy. She apologised for intruding on her but justified herself by saying: “You are the only female writer who I coincide in opinion with respecting the rank our sex ought to endeavour to attain in the world. I respect Mrs Macaulay Graham because she contends for laurels whilst most of

Wollstonecraft would later recant her characterisation of Macaulay as a masculine writer: "I will not call hers a masculine understanding, because I admit not of such an arrogant assumption of reason..."⁸¹⁹ After Macaulay's death, Wollstonecraft wrote of her as:

The woman of the greatest abilities, undoubtedly, that this country has ever produced; and yet this woman has been suffered to die without sufficient respect being paid to her memory. Posterity, however, will be more just, and remember Catherine Macaulay was an example of intellectual acquirements supposed to be incompatible with the weakness of her sex. In her style of writing, indeed, no sex appears, for it is like the sense it conveys, strong and clear.⁸²⁰

However, posterity has not been just and Ralph Wardle and Dale Spender, amongst others, have wondered why Macaulay has been forgotten while Wollstonecraft has been championed, given that Macaulay raised the same arguments as Wollstonecraft but earlier. Macaulay was socially well-connected, famous both in Britain and America, a friend of George Washington and a respected historian; Wollstonecraft was a lower middle-class former governess who wrote sentimental novels and journalism. Spender suggests three reasons for Macaulay's 'disappearance'. Firstly, she was a radical, at least in terms of women's right to education. There was a reaction against radicalism in the nineteenth century and, as I will argue, Wollstonecraft was less radical than Macaulay. Secondly, her disappearance was "a convenient patriarchal reconstruction..."⁸²¹ Wollstonecraft's claim to be representative of her sex was stronger if Macaulay was seen to be presenting the same case at the same time and, Spender argues, one of them had to go for male commentators to argue there was but a lone voice asserting the feminist cause.

her sex only seek for flowers." (To Macaulay, no exact date given but sent December 1790, in Todd (ed.) 2003: 186) Macaulay replied on 30/12/1790, thanking Wollstonecraft for her "excellent pamphlet" which had pleased her in several ways. She was pleased that it received such good public attention, pleased with the compliments Wollstonecraft had paid her and was "still more highly pleased that this publication which I have so greatly admired from its pathos & sentiment should have been written by a woman and thus to see my opinion of the powers and talents of the sex in your person so early verified." (Ibid.: 186) She had written that she would be glad to correspond with Wollstonecraft, but her death in 1791 prevented any closer friendship.

⁸¹⁹ 1992: 210.

⁸²⁰ Ibid.

⁸²¹ 1983: 130.

Spender's third argument for Macaulay's disappearance was her scandalous second marriage. As she notes, "Macaulay offended public taste by her private morals..."⁸²² In 1778 she married her doctor's brother, William Graham, who was not only less than half her age (she was 48, he 22) but also of a lower class.⁸²³ Although Wollstonecraft would cause a scandal by having a child outside marriage, this was after the publication of the *Vindications*. As Wardle notes:

Unfortunately for the author, *Letters on Education* appeared only after Mrs. Macaulay had sacrificed her extraordinary popularity by her second marriage. And it remained for Mary Wollstonecraft to circulate many of the ideas advanced in the *Letters*.⁸²⁴

Makin, Astell, Sophia and Macaulay all argued against the social creation of female and feminine identity. They argued that this identity was created as weak and subservient and denied that women were innately inferior. Men, not God, had made women inferior; men, not nature, consigned them to the home and domestic sphere. Despite this women had managed to educate themselves and aimed to be useful to their society. Women were trained 'to throw away their life in the pursuit of trifles'; however, these writers wanted women to realise their potential. It is significant that all of these writers concentrated on education as *the* tool for the liberation of women from the shackles men had made for them. With education came freedom, as women were empowered to support themselves and freed from total dependence on men. With education came an interest an engagement with the world, enlarging women's moral capabilities. Education gave women power, not over others as men's education did, but over themselves. Education was the key to creating a positive female identity which enabled women to recognise and reject the identity men gave them and create themselves in their own image. This early challenge to imposed and other-created identity was to lay the foundations for later contestations of female and feminine

⁸²² Ibid.

⁸²³ While Wollstonecraft sometimes referred to herself as Mary Imlay (Gilbert Imlay, with whom she had a significant relationship, was the father of her first child) or Mary Godwin (William Godwin was her husband and father of her second child), she is always referred to by others as Mary Wollstonecraft. Macaulay is always referred to by her husbands' names – either Catharine Macaulay (she married George Macaulay in 1760 and was widowed in 1766) or Catharine Macaulay Graham. Her 'maiden' or own name was Catharine Sawbridge.

⁸²⁴ 1951: 145.

identity. There are also clear parallels between women and the lower orders: both were oppressed; both were denied education as they had no place in public life; both were treated as 'a finer sort of cattle' by their society.

Section Two: Mary Wollstonecraft

Mary Wollstonecraft's work – her novels, journalism and political pamphlets – addressed the issue of women's subjugation; it also addressed the question of political responsibility, particularly in relation to gender.⁸²⁵ Her work brought her to public attention and she was a controversial character both in life and in death.⁸²⁶ Her widower William Godwin wrote, "perhaps no female writer ever obtained so great a degree of celebrity throughout Europe."⁸²⁷ After her death he wrote a biography of her: "It seldom happens that such a person passes through life, without being the subject of thoughtless calumny, or malignant misrepresentation."⁸²⁸ He wrote glowingly of her and her work, of "her firmness of mind, an unconquerable greatness of soul ... Whatever Mary undertook, she perhaps in all instances accomplished..."⁸²⁹ And what she undertook was no small thing, arguing for women's rights – social, educational and political – in a male-dominated society. Wardle wrote that "it took a great deal of self-assurance to wage war single-handedly

⁸²⁵ Mary Wollstonecraft, 1759-1797, writer and journalist. She worked as a translator, translating Necker's *De l'importance des opinions religieuses* from French and various children's stories from German. Other works include: *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters with Reflections on Female Conduct, in the more important Duties of Life*, 1787; *Mary, A Fiction*, 1788; *Original Stories from Real Life, with conversations, calculated to regulate the affections, and form the mind to truth and goodness*, 1788; *The Female Reader*, 1789; *A Vindication of the Rights of Men, in a letter to the Right Honourable Edmund Burke*, 1790; *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects*, 1792; *An Historical and Moral View of the Origin and Progress of the French Revolution*, 1794; *Letters Written During a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark*, 1796; *Posthumous Works of the Author of a Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, 1798. Most of Wollstonecraft's journalistic career consisted of work for the *Analytical Review*.

⁸²⁶ The main works used here are: *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (Wollstonecraft 1992); *Contributions to the Analytical Review Vol. 8* (pp.285-331 in Todd and Butler (eds.) 1989 Vol. 7, referred to as Wollstonecraft A); *Contributions to the Analytical Review Vol. 1* (pp.19-35 in Todd and Butler (eds.) 1989 Vol. 7, referred to as Wollstonecraft B); *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* (pp.54-56 in Jones (ed.) 1990, referred to as Wollstonecraft C); *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* (pp.1-49 in Todd and Butler (eds.) 1989 Vol. 4, referred to as Wollstonecraft D); *A Vindication of the Rights of Men* (pp.64-83 in Todd (ed.) 1989, referred to as Wollstonecraft E); *An Historical View of the Origin and Progress of the French Revolution* (pp.1-235 in Todd and Butler (eds.) 1989 Vol. 6, referred to as Wollstonecraft F); *Mary, A Fiction* (pp.1-73 in Todd and Butler (eds.) 1989 Vol. 1, referred to as Wollstonecraft G); *The Wrongs of Women: or Maria* (pp.75-184 in Todd and Butler (eds.) 1989 Vol. 1, referred to as Wollstonecraft H); *The Female Reader* (pp.53-350 in Todd and Butler (eds.) 1989 Vol. 4, referred to as Wollstonecraft I); *Original Stories* (pp.359-450 in Todd and Butler (eds.) 1989 Vol. 4, referred to as Wollstonecraft J).

⁸²⁷ 1990: 73.

⁸²⁸ Ibid.: 1. Wollstonecraft died of septicaemia following the birth of her second child in 1797.

⁸²⁹ Ibid.: 36.

against a society that had scarcely given a thought to women's rights, legal or economic, to say nothing of political..."⁸³⁰

I would disagree that she fought the war alone since, as I have shown, Makin, Astell, Sophia and Macaulay were all combatants, but she certainly became the most *visible* early advocate of women's rights. Hobsbawm praised "the simple and elementary standards of Mary Wollstonecraft, who asked for the same rights for both sexes..."⁸³¹ Miriam Brody wrote of the second *Vindication* as "the feminist declaration of independence."⁸³² However, Wollstonecraft is too often ignored in 'standard' texts on the history of political philosophy. Antony Quinton's chapter on political philosophy in Antony Kenny's 1994 *The Oxford Illustrated History of Western Philosophy* devotes just one hundred words to her.⁸³³ Of those hundred words, at least a tenth discuss her family relations: "Mary Wollstonecraft, wife of William Godwin, and mother of Mary Shelley"; "Godwin's wife, Mary Wollstonecraft..."⁸³⁴ Her work is referred to as "confused but eloquent", and compared unflatteringly with John Stuart Mill's writing on the subjugation of women, which *he* dealt with "with his usual lucidity..."⁸³⁵ There is no mention of her in Bertrand Russell's *A History of Western Philosophy*.⁸³⁶ While I will be assessing Wollstonecraft's political philosophy, as articulated in her two *Vindications*, I will also consider her journalistic, historical and fictional writing to give a complete picture of her views. Like Mackenzie, she used such writings to argue social and political points. As Janet Todd has argued, in her novels she wrote of the wretched situation of intelligent women, of the problems of "an alienated intellectual woman, the beginning of a line [of] women who tried to make their own way in the world and

⁸³⁰ 'Introduction', pp.27-50 in Wardle (ed.) 1979: 29.

⁸³¹ 2003: 216.

⁸³² 'Introduction', pp. 1-73 in Wollstonecraft 1992: 1.

⁸³³ 'Political Philosophy', pp.275-362 in Kenny (ed.) 1994.

⁸³⁴ *Ibid.*: 346.

⁸³⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸³⁶ In a book over 800 pages long, women are mentioned roughly 20 times: as slaves; as participants in bacchic rituals; as temptresses or corrupting influences on men; as comfort for men. Russell noted in passing that the institution of private property "brings with it the subjection of women..." (1990: 36) He commented of Athenian democracy that "though it had the grave limitation of not including slaves or women, [it] was in some respects more democratic than any modern system." (*Ibid.*: 92)

who expressed a complex misery at their situation and at the feminine images available to them.”⁸³⁷

Wollstonecraft and civic humanism

Wollstonecraft has been claimed as both a feminist and as a liberal thinker and both are valid readings of her work. However, much has already been written on these aspects of her work. My focus instead will be on her civic humanism, with her concerns about gender intertwined with her concerns about active citizenship. Wollstonecraft argued in the tradition of civic humanism, with her belief that individuals could only fully realise and exercise their capacities by education and engagement with the world: “a man must be a *man*, employed to improve his understanding, and govern his passions and appetite ... not having proper occupations to exercise his faculties, they must sleep the sleep of death...”⁸³⁸ However, as previously argued, the civic tradition had specifically excluded women and demonised the feminine and effeminate. Macaulay was also influenced by civic republicanism and Pocock wondered “why these powerful female intellects adopted so primarily masculine a central value as that of classical citizenship.”⁸³⁹ I would argue that one reason was that they wanted to reclaim as universal human characteristics those values and morals earmarked as specifically male by the civic tradition.

I will consider Wollstonecraft’s analysis of the social and political creation of ‘feminine’ identity and how these imposed characteristics were used to exclude women from the public realm and citizenship. As Virginia Sapiro argues, such identity politics involves the creation, control and manipulation of language; correspondingly, conceptual change can be understood as an important part of political change:

⁸³⁷ ‘Introduction’, pp.vii-xxix in Wollstonecraft and Shelley 1992: x.

⁸³⁸ Wollstonecraft B, August 1788 review of ‘Sketches of Society and Manners in Portugal’ by Costigan: 31/32. Italics in original.

⁸³⁹ 1999b: 257.

Wollstonecraft used a number of concepts that were contested in her day ... She was clearly a participant in struggles over some of these concepts. This was most surely the case in her attempt to redefine reason and virtue with ungendered meaning.⁸⁴⁰

Wollstonecraft, a fervent advocate of women's education, argued that true virtue was dependent on knowledge and, therefore, for women to be truly virtuous they first needed to be educated. Women's education would benefit not only themselves but would also facilitate social progress and development. She took her moral lexicon from the masculine model of civic virtue which represented citizenship as wholeheartedly engaging in public duties; by fulfilling these duties men fully realised their human potential. As Ferguson had written, man's happiness or misery was dependent "on the degree in which he acquits himself properly of his charge as an intellectual and moral agent."⁸⁴¹ Wollstonecraft wanted to extend this civic humanist model of citizenship to women:

It is time to affect a revolution in female manners – time to restore to them their lost dignity – and make them, as a part of the human species, labour by reforming themselves to reform the world. It is time to separate unchangeable morals from local manners.⁸⁴²

Through all her work, she advocated women's intellectual and moral cultivation. She criticised early marriages as a hindrance to the improvement of women's capacities, for even if women received a basic education only the foundation was laid and they were all too soon supposed to devote themselves to pleasing their men. Any understanding was little exercised as they had no opportunity to interact with the world: "Nothing, I am sure, calls forth the faculties so much as being obliged to struggle with the world; and this is not a woman's province in a married state."⁸⁴³ A woman was expected to be subservient and surrender to her husband's will as she had surrendered to her father's, with women discouraged from holding or expressing

⁸⁴⁰ Sapiro 1992: xviii.

⁸⁴¹ 'Of Perfection and Happiness', pp.1-7 in Amoh (ed.) 1996: 3.

⁸⁴² 1992: 133.

⁸⁴³ Wollstonecraft C: 55.

their own views. This was unacceptable to Wollstonecraft: "I wish then to be taught to think..."⁸⁴⁴

In her *A Vindication of the Rights of Men*, Wollstonecraft clearly articulated her civic humanist views, inveighing against the luxury and effeminacy of a society which enabled individuals to pamper their appetites at the expense of their public duty.⁸⁴⁵ Men should be engaged with the world but instead "supinely exist without exercising mind or body, they have ceased to be men."⁸⁴⁶ The contemporary notion of citizenship was not "that enthusiastic flame which in Greece and Rome consumed every sordid passion: no, self is the focus..."⁸⁴⁷ Society did not compel individuals to participate in public life by making that participation the way to gain respect; rather, respect was paid to wealth and personal charm, and riches became the sole mark of distinction. This led to "an unmanly servility" in society, where truly virtuous men could not "advance in such crooked paths, or wade through the filth which *parasites* never boggle at."⁸⁴⁸ Carmichael, Hutcheson, Ferguson and Mackenzie had made similar arguments but Wollstonecraft had a very different attitude to women. She had written the first *Vindication* on behalf of humanity but increasingly came to see that women were excluded when the rights of men were disputed; her second *Vindication*, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* drew attention to this exclusion. This work is often called the first major work of feminist political theory. For reasons already noted, I would argue that it is the first *remembered* work of feminist political theory, but it is certainly still an important work.

⁸⁴⁴ Wollstonecraft D: 11.

⁸⁴⁵ This was part of a pamphlet war. In 1789 Dr Richard Price, a close friend of Wollstonecraft's, had published *On the Love of Country*. Price, 1723-1792, was a Welsh dissenting minister, moral theologian and advocate of Parliamentary reform. *On the Love of Country* argued that we should be able to choose our governors, cashier them for mismanagement and frame government for ourselves. He compared the French Revolution to the 'Glorious Revolution' and argued that governments held power in trust from the people and were not the instruments of divine authority. Edmund Burke responded with his 1790 *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, a refutation of such reformist writing defending the aristocratic status quo against demands for constitutional reform. This provoked several replies, including Wollstonecraft's *Vindication* and Macaulay's *Observations*. Burke's *Reflections* was published 1/11/1790; Wollstonecraft's reply was published anonymously just 29 days later, 29/11/1790, with a second, named, edition appearing 18/12/1790.

⁸⁴⁶ Wollstonecraft E: 67.

⁸⁴⁷ *Ibid.*: 68.

⁸⁴⁸ *Ibid.*: 71. Italics in original.

Wollstonecraft was concerned by the decline of civic virtue: "Public spirit must be nurtured by private virtue..."⁸⁴⁹ However, private virtue could not flourish in a society where people thought of themselves as individuals rather than as members of a community. Individuals were becoming increasingly self-obsessed and "the duties of citizens, husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, and directors of families, become merely the selfish ties of convenience."⁸⁵⁰ She argued that while riches and inherited honours were destructive to the character of both sexes, women were more debased than men because men could develop their faculties in the public realm. However, the Standing Army denied many men this opportunity and promoted moral degeneration in men. In civic humanist style, she argued that a Standing Army was incompatible with true freedom because of the subordination necessary to create the right spirit: a spirit of honour could be felt by few, the officers and the elite, with the main body of men, the lower orders, motivated only by fear. Standing Armies could "never consist of resolute, robust men; they may be well-disciplined machines, but they will seldom contain men ... with very vigorous faculties..."⁸⁵¹ The days of true heroism were over, when men fought for their country and then returned to the farm:

No, our British heroes are oftener sent from the gaming table than from the plough; and their passions have rather been inflamed by hanging with dumb suspense on the turn of a die, than subliminated by panting after the adventurous march of virtue in the historic page.⁸⁵²

She emphasised this point: "surely the present school of war has little connection with virtue of any denomination, being rather the school of *finesse* and effeminacy than of fortitude."⁸⁵³ She drew an intriguing comparison between the soldiers of a Standing Army and women. Women's intellectual capacities, like soldiers', are subordinate to some corporeal accomplishment; women, like soldiers, are drilled to behave in a certain way; women and military men are both "sent into the world

⁸⁴⁹ 1992: 256.

⁸⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁵¹ Ibid.: 106.

⁸⁵² Ibid.: 261.

⁸⁵³ Ibid.: 263. Italics in original.

before their minds have been stored with knowledge or fortified by principles.”⁸⁵⁴
The consequences are similar, as both acquire merely superficial knowledge:

Soldiers, as well as women, practise the minor virtues with punctilious politeness. Where is then the sexual difference, when the education has been the same? All the difference that I can discern arises from the superior advantage of liberty which enables the former to see more of life.⁸⁵⁵

Wollstonecraft drew a parallel between society ladies and officers, who are “particularly attentive to their persons, fond of dancing, crowded rooms, adventures, and ridicule. Like the *fair* sex, the business of their lives is gallantry; they were taught to please, and they only live to please.”⁸⁵⁶ She was particularly critical of the effeminacy of the French, arguing that, although Louis XIV committed despotic acts of cruelty, he at least introduced his people to English masculine writing, “which contributed to rouse the sleeping manhood of the french.”⁸⁵⁷ However, unlike more traditional civic humanists, Wollstonecraft did not conflate effeminacy with women. Individuals were effeminate in relation to their neglect of public duties, not because they behaved like women or at least how women were perceived to act. She discussed France before the Revolution, where “a variety of causes have so effeminated reason, that the french may be considered as a nation of women; and made feeble...”⁸⁵⁸ She was not arguing that the French were effeminate because they were acting like women, but that a false system of education had corrupted them, as women were corrupted by their education. The key phrase is ‘made feeble’ – women were made, not born, feeble, as were the French by the pernicious effects of luxury.⁸⁵⁹ This was emphasised by a later argument that when the object of education

⁸⁵⁴ Ibid.: 105.

⁸⁵⁵ Ibid.: 105/106.

⁸⁵⁶ Ibid.: 106. Italics in original.

⁸⁵⁷ Wollstonecraft F: 28. Here she seems to be arguing for English political theory as theoretical viagra.

⁸⁵⁸ Ibid.: 121.

⁸⁵⁹ Wollstonecraft inveighed not against luxury but against its possibly corrupting effects. Comfort was no bad thing but should never be one’s sole concern. “Men exclaim, only noticing the evil, against the luxury introduced with the arts and sciences; when it is obviously the cultivation of these alone, emphatically termed the arts of peace, that can turn the sword into a ploughshare. War is the adventure naturally pursued by the idle, and it requires something of this species, to excite the strong emotions necessary to rouse inactive minds.” (Wollstonecraft F: 23) However, in her letters a personal

was to prepare the pupil to please, to look attractive and act well, this can only lead to “a tincture of vanity, and that weal vacillation of opinion, which is incompatible with what we term character. Thus a frenchman, like most women, may be said to have no character...”⁸⁶⁰ She argued that women had been rendered weak and wretched by social conditioning, by a false system of education which forced them to be subservient and ornamental.⁸⁶¹

This system of education was imposed by men who saw women only as instruments of pleasure, and who, “considering females rather as women than as human creatures, have been more anxious to make them alluring mistresses than affectionate wives and rational mothers...”⁸⁶² Women’s minds were warped by such false refinement and hence they sought love instead of respect. Women sought to be weak instead of strong. In her novel *Mary*, Wollstonecraft described the heroine’s mother who had made herself an invalid to conform to societal notions of gentility: “Her voice was but the sound of a shadow, and she had, to complete her delicacy, so relaxed her nerves, that she became a mere nothing. Many such noughts are there in the female world!”⁸⁶³ The system of false education was bolstered by novels which encouraged vanity, ignorance and affectation. Like Mackenzie, she criticised novels

view can be seen. She writes to Imlay, a businessman: “Be not too anxious to get money! – for nothing worth having is to be purchased.” (To Gilbert Imlay, 29/12/1793 in Todd (ed.) 2003: 235) In a later letter she writes: “I hate commerce.” (To Gilbert Imlay, 1/1/1794, Ibid.: 238) Commerce “debases the mind, and roots out affection from the heart.” (To Gilbert Imlay, 9/1/1795, Ibid.: 277) She visits the house of one of Imlay’s business associates and is not impressed. On his home: “the house smelt of commerce from top to toe...” On his taste: “his abortive attempt to display taste, only proved it was one of the things not to be bought with gold.” (To Gilbert Imlay, 17/8/1794, Ibid.: 256)

⁸⁶⁰ Wollstonecraft F: 230.

⁸⁶¹ This extended to clothing. In a letter to Godwin, Wollstonecraft complained that she had caught a cold from going out in unsuitable clothes. “The dress of women seems to be invented to render them dependent, in more senses than one.” (To William Godwin, 12/12/1796 in Todd (ed.) 2003: 383) Wollstonecraft disapproved of women dressing to please men. Then as now, her appearance was considered relevant as it never is for male writers and thinkers. Although Wardle praises her intellectual abilities he strays into patronising discussions of her appearance. For example, he says that in 1791 Wollstonecraft began to dress a little better: “there was a satisfaction, she found, in squandering a bit of money on oneself. And it was a real delight to prove to skeptics that an intelligent woman need not be a fright. Mary had fine auburn hair, good features, and a trim figure which could be charmingly feminine. Now that she proved her wits were what was commonly called ‘masculine’, she could afford to discard her old coarse gown, arrange her hair becomingly, and indulge in a bit of harmless vanity.” (1951: 132) Even women comment on her appearance. Tomalin wrote of fashion, “a pre-occupation Mary despised with the confidence of the deliberately dowdy intellectual woman.” (1977: 29)

⁸⁶² 1992: 79.

⁸⁶³ Wollstonecraft G: 7.

which encouraged artificial feelings and the neglect of duties: young women “boast of being tremblingly alive all o’er, and faint and sigh as the novelist informs them they should. Hunting after shadows, the ordinary enjoyments of life are despised, and its duties neglected...”⁸⁶⁴ Rational books, which taught proper feelings, were neglected. Wollstonecraft outlined her opinion of what such a book would be like in her review of Wiesland’s *Henrietta of Gerstenfeld. A German Story*:

this story is much superior to the generality of those mis-shapen monsters, daily brought forth to poison the minds of our young females, by fostering vanity, and teaching affectation. It does not delineate the character of a duchess, or even a countess; we have not long descriptions of midnight amusements, or splendid dresses exhibited to the gazing crowd. The heroine, though ‘in the noon of beauty’s power’ has not a train of adorers. Domestic happiness is the theme. Such descriptions, though they may mislead the judgement, do not vitiate the heart.⁸⁶⁵

Women who refused to conform to the appropriate standards, who sought to be strong and respected, were criticised by men for acting in a masculine fashion. Wollstonecraft admitted the existence of masculine women but changed the evaluation of those who qualified, arguing that it was women who subscribed to male ideas of female inferiority and adopted the sentiments of those who brutalised them who were masculine. She commented that the word masculine “is only a bugbear”, that she had heard many men complain about masculine women and was tempted to join them.⁸⁶⁶

If by this appellation men mean to inveigh against their ardour in hunting, shooting, and gaming, I shall most cordially join in the cry; but if it be against the imitation of manly virtues, or, more properly speaking, the attainment of those talents and virtues, the exercise of which ennoble the human character, and which raises females in the scale of animal being, when they are comprehensively termed mankind, all those who view them with a philosophic eye must, I should think, wish with me, that they may every day grow more and more masculine.⁸⁶⁷

⁸⁶⁴ Wollstonecraft B, June 1788, review of ‘Edward and Harriet, or the Happy Recovery’: a sentimental novel. By a Lady’: 19.

⁸⁶⁵ Ibid.: 20.

⁸⁶⁶ 1992: 83.

⁸⁶⁷ Ibid.: 80/81.

Women were generally physically weaker than men but, not content with this, men sought to ensure they were also intellectually weaker and she lamented that women's inferiority should "be increased by prejudices that give a sex to virtue..."⁸⁶⁸ Wollstonecraft did not claim women to be superior, as Sophia had, but argued that it was ridiculous to judge women when they had been so debased. Men had increased women's inferiority, "till women are almost sunk below the standard of rational creatures."⁸⁶⁹ Until women were given equal educational opportunities, they should not be judged: "Let their faculties have room to unfold, and their virtues to gain strength, and then determine where the whole sex must stand in the intellectual scale."⁸⁷⁰

Women and education

Writers such as Dr James Fordyce, Dr John Gregory and Jean-Jacques Rousseau had contributed to rendering women useless members of society and, in a chapter entitled 'Animadversions on Some of the Writers Who Have Rendered Women Objects of Pity, Bordering on Contempt', Wollstonecraft engaged with their arguments. She responded to Fordyce's argument that to be attractive to men and assure their protection women should be pretty, pliant and pleasant: "No, beauty, gentleness ... may gain a heart; but esteem, the only lasting affection, can only be obtained by virtue supported by reason."⁸⁷¹ She replied in passing to Gregory, commenting that although his case was unworthy she could not "silently pass over arguments that so speciously support opinions which, I think, have had the most baneful effects on the morals and manners of the female world."⁸⁷² However, she engaged in some depth with Rousseau's arguments.⁸⁷³ Although she admired elements of his work, she disagreed with his attitude to women. Rousseau, like Ferguson, was a civic humanist

⁸⁶⁸ Ibid.: 84.

⁸⁶⁹ Ibid.: 120.

⁸⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁷¹ Ibid.: 199.

⁸⁷² Ibid.

⁸⁷³ Macaulay had earlier criticised Rousseau's arguments on women's education: "it is pride and sensuality that speak in Rousseau, and, in this instance, has lowered the man of genius to the licentious pedant." (Macaulay MDCCXC: 206)

thinker who demonised the female, feminine and effeminate and in his work women were rarely mentioned outside their relation to men. He juxtaposed civic equality with the 'natural' or hierarchical order of the family and predicated as undeniable the sexual difference that denied women any public role. There was an internal debate in civic humanism in the eighteenth century as its followers sought to accommodate its principles to a newly commercial age. We have seen how Ferguson sought (but failed) to update the civic tradition; Rousseau sought (unrealistically) to reaffirm tenets of the civic tradition; Wollstonecraft (more successfully) sought to expand key tenets to incorporate half the human race.

Rousseau discussed women's education in some depth in *Emile*, which was concerned with the education of the perfect man and citizen. His Emile was to be a thinker; a philosopher; a theologian; an ardent, lively, eager, fiery and virtuous young man. Such a paragon needed a suitable mate – Sophy. Women were made for man's delight and since she was made to please and be in subjection to man "she ought to make herself pleasing in his eyes and not to provoke him to anger..."⁸⁷⁴ For Rousseau, any strength a woman had was in her weakness; to challenge this was to remove any power women might have. He addressed the concern of women writers:

women are always exclaiming that we educate them for nothing but vanity and coquetry, that we keep them amused with trifles that we may be their masters; we are responsible, so they say, for the faults we attribute to them. How silly! What have men to do with the education of girls?⁸⁷⁵

There was nothing to prevent women educating their daughters as they saw fit. Women were the ones who forced their girls to dress prettily and adorn themselves and it was not men's fault that they found such women attractive. If women were unhappy with this it was up to them to change the situation and educate their daughters more like men. "The more women are like men, the less influence they will have over men, and then men will be masters indeed."⁸⁷⁶ Women should not try to be like men as they would only fail and be inadequate women as a result. But, he

⁸⁷⁴ 1963: 322.

⁸⁷⁵ Ibid.: 327.

⁸⁷⁶ Ibid.

commented, this did not mean that they should be brought up in ignorance, merely that they should learn only those things that were suitable. And, as women were dependent on men and at the mercy of their judgement, women's education should be planned in relation to men:

To be pleasing in his sight, to win his respect and love, to train him in childhood, to tend him in manhood, to counsel and console, to make his life pleasant and happy, these are the duties of women for all time, and this is what she should be taught while she is young. The further we depart from this principle, the further we shall be from our goal, and all our precepts will fail to secure her happiness or our own.⁸⁷⁷

Women needed to know their place and that place was where men put them. They were made to obey and be dependent and any thoughts they had beyond their immediate duties should be directed to the study of men. Women were to be pretty, charming companions who could comfort men and ease their troubled brows. Sophy, the paragon of female virtue, was warm-hearted, good-tempered, dressed simply and elegantly, liked needlework and the female arts and was a good housekeeper. She was temperate, had a thorough, but not deep, mind, patiently endured the wrongdoing of others and was eager to atone for her own. Her character and behaviour suited her to be the companion of a man like Emile. Rousseau did not believe men and women were equal and dismissed any arguments for this: "Vague assertions as to the equality of the sexes and the similarity of their duties are only empty words; they are no answer to my argument."⁸⁷⁸

Wollstonecraft disagreed. Women had been made unequal by men; men's power had been cemented by women's oppression. Women were criticised for being frivolous and temperamental, and while this was sometimes justified, it was only because women were ill-educated with few worthwhile occupations. Ferguson had written of the importance of looking abroad, but this was an opportunity denied to women. Wollstonecraft argued that as a sex, men had better temperaments because "they are occupied by pursuits that interest the head as well as the heart; and the steadiness of

⁸⁷⁷ Ibid.: 328.

⁸⁷⁸ Ibid.: 325.

the head gives a healthy temperature to the heart.”⁸⁷⁹ She also disagreed that women were created for men, arguing that this was an excuse men used to oppress women:

I do not mean to allude to all the writers who have written on the subject of female manners – it would, in fact, be only beating over the old ground, for they have, in general, written in the same strain; but attacking the boasted prerogative of man – the prerogative that may emphatically be called the iron sceptre of tyranny, the original sin of tyrants, I declare against all power built on prejudices, however hoary.⁸⁸⁰

Like Ferguson and Smith, Wollstonecraft argued that character was formed by employment and environment: “the character of every man is, to some degree, formed by his profession.”⁸⁸¹ Indeed, she cited Smith’s *Theory* several times in support of her argument. She characterised his works as “very respectable authority”, and wrote of him as a “cool reasoner...”⁸⁸² Women, Wollstonecraft argued, generally had no professions, no chance to engage with the world and, therefore, no opportunity to sharpen their faculties. Ferguson had argued that “an extension of knowledge is an accession of power” and this was a reason to withhold education from women (and, for Ferguson, the lower orders) and keep them powerless.⁸⁸³ Wollstonecraft likewise believed that educated women would be more powerful but, unlike Ferguson, did not see this as a reason to withhold education. She argued that women wanted power over themselves, not others. “In the same strain have I heard men argue against instructing the poor ... ‘Teach them to read and write,’ say they, ‘and you take them out of the station assigned them by nature.’”⁸⁸⁴ For Rousseau, a woman’s station was to be weak and passive, her duty to render herself agreeable to her ‘master’. She should have little liberty because women were apt to abuse any liberty given to them. For Wollstonecraft there was a simple explanation: “Slaves and mobs have always indulged themselves in the same excesses, when once they broke loose from authority.”⁸⁸⁵

⁸⁷⁹ 1992: 182.

⁸⁸⁰ Ibid.: 204.

⁸⁸¹ Ibid.: 98.

⁸⁸² Ibid.: 248.

⁸⁸³ 1792 Vol. 1: 2.

⁸⁸⁴ 1992: 156.

⁸⁸⁵ Ibid.: 181/182.

For Wollstonecraft, women were slaves “in a political and civil sense”, enslaved by patriarchal laws and patriarchal customs.⁸⁸⁶ One of these was marriage. Smith had compared the position of slaves and wives, both legally beholden to their ‘master’; Wollstonecraft argued that marriage enslaved women. She made this point several times in her fiction. For example, the heroine of *Mary* refuses to live with her husband, a man she has been forced to marry: “I will work, she cried, do anything rather than be a slave.”⁸⁸⁷ In *Maria* the heroine, imprisoned in an asylum by her husband so that he can claim her money, lamented: “Was not the world a vast prison, and women born slaves?”⁸⁸⁸ Maria had made an early marriage to escape home only to find it another form of confinement: “in my haste to ... expand my newly fledged wings ... I had been caught in a trap, and caged for life.”⁸⁸⁹ Women were also enslaved by ignorance and to counteract this Wollstonecraft outlined her educational plan. Children of both sexes should be educated together, with the same syllabus. In a similar vein to Smith, she argued that day schools should be established by the government to educate children aged 5-9 which should be free and open to all.⁸⁹⁰ Children would be taught various subjects and also be encouraged in gymnastic play, as she stressed the importance of exercise. After the age of nine, those intended for domestic employment or mechanical trades would attend a separate school to those brighter and richer students; their education would be tailored to suit their intended occupation.⁸⁹¹

⁸⁸⁶ Ibid.: 292.

⁸⁸⁷ Wollstonecraft G: 55.

⁸⁸⁸ Wollstonecraft H: 83.

⁸⁸⁹ Ibid.: 138.

⁸⁹⁰ Like Smith, Wollstonecraft disapproved of boarding schools. Smith had argued that educating children at boarding schools seemed to hurt the most essential domestic morals and consequently domestic happiness. Wollstonecraft argued that children needed to be educated from home “to inspire a love of home and domestic pleasures...” (1992: 285) Another reason was that boys at boarding schools picked up bad sexual habits and attitudes: “at school, boys infallibly lose that decent bashfulness, which might have ripened into modesty, at home. And what nasty indecent tricks do they not also learn from each other, when a number of them pig together in the same bedchamber...” (Ibid.: 288)

⁸⁹¹ Mandeville, a critic of charity schools, made similar arguments. He argued that educating people destined for humble lives would not inure them to their lot, believing instead that it would produce restless, discontented individuals, who had enough education to know there was something better in life, but too little to achieve it.

Wollstonecraft argued, as had Makin, Astell and Macaulay, that educated women would cease to be merely pretty burdens and begin to contribute to their society:

To render women truly useful members of society, I argue that they should be led, by having their understandings cultivated on a large scale, to acquire a rational affection for their country, founded on knowledge, because it is obvious that we are little interested in about what we do not understand.⁸⁹²

While Wollstonecraft argued women needed to be educated to improve themselves and their society, this did not extend to the lower orders of either sex. She is often praised for expressing the hopes of working-class men in the first *Vindication*; similarly, Claire Tomalin praised the *Original Stories* for its social awareness, arguing “the poor emerged as the most salient feature of every landscape. Callous landlords, rotten housing, inadequate diet, lack of medical care ... roused her to indignation she did not hesitate to express to her young readers.”⁸⁹³ However, this is based on a misreading of Wollstonecraft. As noted in the Introduction to this Thesis, Skinner has written of the ‘mythology of doctrines’ and the ‘mythology of coherence’. It is assumed that since she advocated the rights of women she also advocated working-class rights. However, she had no conception of class as we understand it and it would be wrong to read this back into her work. She did express some pity for the lower orders and wrote of the division of labour debasing them: “the division of labour, solely to enrich the proprietor, renders the mind entirely inactive.”⁸⁹⁴ However, like Ferguson, she devoted more time to the plight of the elite, corrupted by luxury and ease: “by the habitual slothfulness of rusty intellects, or the depravity of the heart, lulled into hardness on the lascivious couch of pleasure...”⁸⁹⁵ Ferguson had written that pity was misapplied to the poor: “it were much more justly applied to the rich, who become the first victims of the wretched insignificance, into which the members of every corrupted state, by the tendency of their weaknesses, and their vices, are in haste to plunge themselves.”⁸⁹⁶ Wollstonecraft seemed to

⁸⁹² 1992: 324.

⁸⁹³ 1977: 102.

⁸⁹⁴ Wollstonecraft F: 233.

⁸⁹⁵ Ibid.: 232.

⁸⁹⁶ 1995: 246.

agree. She wrote of aristocrats of both sexes, whose virtue had been undermined, arguing: "As a class of mankind they have the strongest claim to pity; the education of the rich tends to render them vain and helpless..."⁸⁹⁷ It is illuminating to contrast her criticism of those who deny the poor education, because it took them out of their station, with her own separation of the manual or lower orders from the educated elite. Surely to tailor the education of those destined to domestic or mechanical employment to just those employments at the age of nine is to deny many the opportunity to fulfil their abilities? She may be aiming to liberate 'women', but there is no concomitant liberation of the lower orders, contradicting her own argument that the aim of government ought to be "protecting the weak..."⁸⁹⁸ In her educational plan the government would compound the oppression of a section of the weak - the lower orders - who are politically, socially and economically impotent, by limiting their education to that which made them useful to their employers.

Wollstonecraft's treatment of servants illustrates her attitude to the lower orders. She made it clear that she was writing for a moneyed audience: "My advice will probably be found most useful to mothers in the middle class; and it is from them that the lower imperceptibly gains improvement. Custom, produced by reason in one, may safely be the effect of imitation in the other."⁸⁹⁹ The middle class could be educated as they had reason; the lower orders could be persuaded to imitate them without really understanding their behaviour. Wollstonecraft criticised men for infantilising women: "Men, indeed, appear to me to act in a very unphilosophical manner, when they try to secure the good conduct of women by attempting to keep them always in a state of childhood."⁹⁰⁰ However, this was the approach she herself took towards servants. She assumed that servants would be part of a woman's life and advised on the best way to treat them, which was like children: "Servants are, in general, ignorant and cunning; we must consider their characters, if we would treat them properly, and continually practise forbearance. The same methods we use with

⁸⁹⁷ 1992: 81.

⁸⁹⁸ Wollstonecraft F: 19/20.

⁸⁹⁹ 'Letter I' in Todd and Butler (eds.) 1989 Vol. 4: 459.

⁹⁰⁰ 1992: 101.

children may be adopted with regard to them.”⁹⁰¹ She discussed servants as creatures without reason who could not be made good or wise “but we may teach them to be decent and orderly...”⁹⁰² Apparently, education could liberate women but should teach servants to know their place. There was casual insult of servants throughout her work, as when in her *Original Stories* she warned of leaving children too long in the care of credulous and stupid servants, cautioning that if one wished one’s children to be moral one should keep them away from servants “or people equally ignorant.”⁹⁰³ She balanced the insults with her patronising paternalism. Mackenzie had written that gentleness was part of the wages ‘we’ owe the lower orders; Wollstonecraft concurred, encouraging her readers to treat servants gently to get the best out of them:

⁹⁰¹ Wollstonecraft D: 38. She had criticised Gregory for his attitude and advice to women but quotes with approval his advice on the proper treatment of servants in her *The Female Reader or Miscellaneous Pieces in prose and verse; selected from the best writers, and disposed under proper heads; for the Improvement of Young Women*. “Beware of making confidants of your servants. Dignity not properly understood very readily degenerates into pride, which enters into no friendships, because it cannot bear an equal, and is so fond of flattery as to grasp at it even from servants and dependants. The most intimate confidants, therefore, of proud people are valets-de-chambre and waiting-women. Shew the utmost humanity to your servants; make their situation as comfortable to them as possible: but if you make them your confidants you spoil them and debase yourself.” (Gregory in Wollstonecraft I: 69/70)

⁹⁰² Wollstonecraft D: 39

⁹⁰³ Wollstonecraft J: 361. This attitude seems particularly strange from someone who, as a governess, had been a domestic servant and had resented being treated with condescension. Wollstonecraft disliked aristocratic women and developed a particular dislike for her employer, Lady Kingsborough. She did not enjoy her company, criticising her in letters for fussing over her dogs not her children. “Lady K’s animal passion fills up the hours which are not spent in dressing.” (To Everina Wollstonecraft 11/17/1786 in Todd (ed.) 2003: 91) She lamented the lack of intelligent discussion: “Confined to the society of a set of silly females, I have no social converse - and their boisterous spirits and unmeaning laughter exhausts me, not forgetting, hourly domestic bickerings. The topics of matrimony and dress take their turn.” (To Everina Wollstonecraft, 17/11/1786 in Wardle (ed.) 1979: 126) She found her employer unintelligent and insensitive. “She is devoid of sensibility - of course, *vanity* only inspires her immoderate love of praise - and *selfishness* her *traffick* of civility - and the fulsome untruths, with all their train of strong expressions without any ideas annexed to them.” (To Everina Wollstonecraft, 11/3/1787, *Ibid.*: 151. Italics in original) Wollstonecraft is wonderfully patronising to Lady Kingsborough: “although the conversation of this female cannot amuse me I try to entertain her...” (To Everina Wollstonecraft, 11/5/1787 in Todd (ed.) 2003: 124) Lady Kingsborough must have been very grateful!

kindness must be shewn, if we are desirous that our domestics should be attached to our interest and persons. How pleasing it is to be attended with a smile of willingness, to be consulted when they are at a loss, and looked up to as a friend and a benefactor when they are in distress. It is true we may often meet with ingratitude, but it ought not to discourage us; the refreshing showers of heaven fertilize the fields of the unworthy, as well as the just.⁹⁰⁴

Just as there was a disparity between Wollstonecraft's attitude to women and the lower orders, so there was inconsistency in her advice to women as regards the domestic realm. She had argued that women should look abroad and see themselves as part of a greater community: "Women too often confine their love and charity to their own families. They fix not in their minds the precedency of moral obligations, or make their feelings give way to duty."⁹⁰⁵ However, she also stressed the importance of fulfilling one's domestic role: "No employment of the mind is a sufficient excuse for neglecting domestic duties ... A woman may fit herself to be the companion and friend of a man of sense, and yet know how to take care of his family."⁹⁰⁶ Women could find satisfaction in acting virtuously in the domestic sphere. Hutcheson and Smith had extended Carmichael's characterisation of Pufendorf's 'simple' and 'intensive' reputation to women; Wollstonecraft concurred. There was virtue in performing one's duties to the best of one's abilities, as she argued in a story, 'Filial Attention', from *The Female Reader*. Mr Hargrave, a widower, retires to the country to raise his daughter, Emily, an attractive and pleasant girl who refuses several wedding proposals as her father relies on her. He is grateful and comments:

⁹⁰⁴ Wollstonecraft D: 38.

⁹⁰⁵ Ibid.: 39.

⁹⁰⁶ Ibid.: 21.

I have often remarked that there is perseverance in virtue, and a real magnanimity in the other sex, which is scarcely to be equalled in ours. In the virtue of men there are generally some considerations not altogether pure attending it; which, tho they may not detract from, must certainly diminish our wonder at their conduct. The heroic actions of men are commonly performed upon the grand theatre, and the performers have the applauses of an attending and admiring world to animate and support them.⁹⁰⁷

He talks of heroes tortured who were comforted by the conscious admiration of their countrymen; of Cato stabbing himself rather than give up the cause of liberty but consoled by the honourable reputation he will leave. “But, when Emily Hargrave sacrifices every thing to filial goodness and filial affection, she can have no concomitant motive; she can have no external circumstance to animate her. Her silent and secret virtue is the pure and unmingled effect of tenderness, of affection, and of duty.”⁹⁰⁸ While this recognised that women could be virtuous, it seems to place them firmly in the domestic sphere. She had argued that women needed to be educated to improve their faculties; she also argued that this would make them better wives and mothers. Poorly educated women would be less capable of organising family life and it was in men’s interest to liberate women from the shackles of ignorance: “Would men but generously snap our chains, and be content with rational fellowship instead of slavish obedience, they would find us more observant daughters, more affectionate sisters, more faithful wives, more reasonable mothers...”⁹⁰⁹

However, while she can be criticised for arguing for women’s education on instrumental grounds, it should be remembered that these were the same reasons Smith had employed when arguing for the education of the lower orders – self-interest. It was in men’s power to liberate women from ignorance; Wollstonecraft sought to make it in their interest too. Smith had argued that being a good friend or a good parent was a way to be a good citizen; Wollstonecraft seemed to concur,

⁹⁰⁷ Wollstonecraft I: 95.

⁹⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁹ 1992: 269.

arguing that more educated women would produce more educated children, and thus more responsible citizens.

In conclusion, while (as argued earlier) Wollstonecraft is often characterised as a liberal, a feminist or a liberal feminist, it seems more accurate and illuminating to consider her as contributing to the reconfiguration of civic humanism. She articulated clearly civic humanist concerns with effeminacy, with the neglect of public duties and with the correct education of citizens. She shared Ferguson's concern with active citizenship and with the participation of the elite. Like more traditional civic humanists, she sought to exclude the lower orders from public life and to encourage passivity among them. However, she sought also to include women (at least, some women) in the elite. A key civic humanist concept was effeminacy and she shared concerns over this (as did Sophia) but where her (and Sophia's) approach was novel and innovative was in changing the meaning and understanding of the term. Behaviour often lauded by civic humanists, such as hunting, aggression and fighting, was adjudged 'effeminate' in that it distracted individuals from their proper public duties. Like Sophia, she argued that women should not seek to emulate men overly concerned with 'traditional' manly activities, such as hunting, but should seek to attain those universal virtues that the civic tradition had coded as purely masculine. Unlike Sophia, she did not proclaim women's superiority but argued that their inferiority could not be fairly judged while they were educated and socialised into submission and weakness.

I argued earlier that one reason Wollstonecraft was remembered while other early feminists were forgotten was that she was less radical. Although any call for women's education was radical, she reinforced gender roles and emphasised women's caring nature. In her second *Vindication*, addressing the issue of what women could do in society if educated, she argued they could study healing and suggested midwifery be allotted to them. Wardle argued that the *Thoughts* foreshadowed the second *Vindication* in arguing for girls to be trained as mothers, not as fashionable ornaments to society. However, it is questionable how this

advanced women's cause, since either way they were servicing men. Why is it better to be valued for your caring skills than for your pretty face? In advocating women's education, she stressed the benefits to men: more educated women would be better behaved, better wives and better mothers; men would have more pleasing companions. But while it is easy to criticise her for being less radical than she could have been and for appealing to men's self-interest, given the time and social circumstances, her softening of arguments was necessary. Smith had argued, addressing himself to the elite, those who had the power to change society, that the education of the lower orders was in their interests; Wollstonecraft was forced to do the same, and her appeal to men as well as women perhaps ensured that her argument was more widely noticed.

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